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TWILIGHT VOICES.

WHAT are the whispering voices
That awake at twilight fall?
Do they come from the golden sunset
With their haunting, haunting call?

They tell me of breezy spring-times,
And of dreamy summer eves,
And of snow-wreaths merrily shaken
From the shining ivy leaves.

But the far-off treble changeth
To a tenor tone, and so
I know that the voices tell me
Only of long ago.

What are the tuneful voices
That of early dawn are born?
Do they come from the orient portals
Of the palace of the moon?

They tell of a golden city,
With pearl and jasper bright,
And of shining forms that beckon
Out of the dazzling light.

Then a rush of far-off harpings
Blends with the vision clear,
And I know that the night is passing,
And I know that the day is near!
Good Words. F. H.

GRAPES, WINE, AND VINEGAR.

WEARY and wasted, nigh worn-out,
You sigh and shake white hairs, and say,
"Ah, you will find the truth one day
Of life and nature, do not doubt!"

Age rhymes to sage, and let us give
The hoary head its honours due:
Grant youth its privileges too,
And notions how to think and live.

Which has more chance to see aright
The many-colour'd shows of time,
Fresh human eyes in healthy prime
Or custom-dull'd and fading sight?

Gone from the primrose and the rose
Their diversely delicious breath,
Since no fine wafting visiteth
An old, perhaps a snuffy, nose!

Youth has its truth: I'd rather trust,
Of two extremes, the ardent boy,
Excess of life and hope and joy,
Than this dejection and disgust.

Vinegar of experience — "drink!"
Why so, and set our teeth on edge?
Nay, even grant what you allege,
We'll not anticipate, I think.

Who miss'd, or loses, earlier truth,
Though old, we shall not count him sage:
Rare the strong mellow'd wine of age
From sunshine-ripen'd grapes of youth.
Fraser's Magazine.

A SONG OF LAND AT SEA.

"Now would I give a thousand furlongs of sea for an
acre of barren ground; long heath, brown furze, any-
thing." — *Tempest*, scene 1.

SOFT wind, low piping through the shrouds all
day,
Dost thou not whisper of the woods to me?
Oh for thy wings, that I might speed away
Over this trackless waste of weary sea!

Sing on, sweet wind, a song of summer leaves,
Lispings, through trembling shadows in the
lane,
Of roses nodding under moss-grown eaves,
Of raindrops tinkling on the cottage pane.

Under thy pinions bent the springing wheat,
The large field-daisies bowed their starry
crowns,
The wild thyme sighed to thee, and faintly
sweet
The scent of gorse was blown across the
downs.

Soft wind, low piping through the shrouds to
me,
What would I give to roam where thou hast
been!
A thousand furlongs of this restless sea
For one lone mile of moor or woodland green!
Leisure Hour. SARAH DOUDNEY.

APRIL: A SONNET.

SNOW on the ground, and blossoms on the
trees!

A bitter wind sweeps madly 'cross the moor;
The children shiver at the cottage door,
And old men crouch beside the fire for ease.
Yet still the happy lark disdains the breeze;
The buds swell out, the primrose makes a
floor

Of sylvan beauty, though the frost be hoar,
And ships are battling with tempestuous seas.
'Tis April still, but April wrapt in cloud, —
Month of sweet promise and of nature's
bliss,

When earth leaps up at heaven's reviving
kiss,

And flouts at winter lingering in her shroud.
Haste swiftly, spring, to banish drear decay,
And welcome summer with the smile of May.
Spectator. JOHN DENNIS.

From The Edinburgh Review.

LIFE AND LETTERS OF LORD MACAULAY.*

IN the early years of this century two men were born in England, destined to exercise no common influence on the literature of their country and the opinions of their own age, and possibly of all future time. Both of them were devoted by natural gifts, by education, and by taste to the cultivation and the love of letters, and as men of letters they will be judged by posterity. The power they wielded, and sought to wield, was that most enduring of all dominions, the dominion of the pen. Statesmen, warriors, orators, judges, inventors cross the stage of life, but the great writers remain upon it. The influence of a Homer, a Thucydides, or a Bacon is not only untouched, but it is extended, by time. Countless generations will feel it, as past generations have felt it, as we feel it now. These are the fixed stars of human history; they shine with the pure lustre of thought; their constellation never sets; whatever is most abiding in the fitful destiny of man, abides in them.

To attain to some share in this influence was the object to which the two lives we have now in view were directed. From infancy they followed it with unconscious passion, for at an age when children are commonly engrossed by their toys or their grammars, these boys revelled in the works of great thinkers, poets, and historians. Their amazing powers of memory retained all these impressions with a vivacity and reality seldom acquired by the most laborious study. Like beings endowed with another sense, they only perceived by later observation that their fellow-creatures achieved by infinite drudgery what came to them by nature and intuition. The infancy and boyhood of John Stuart Mill and Thomas Babington Macaulay were marvellous, and, what is not less amazing, they both fulfilled the promise of their earliest years.

But here the parallel must cease, or rather the parallel becomes a contrast. We shall not again retrace the effects on

Mill of the dogmatism of unbelief, of the excessive strain on the reasoning faculties, of a sensitive nature bound in an iron philosophical creed, of the absence of all tender domestic influences, of a passion rebellious to the laws of the world if not of morals, and of a morbid dislike to society, which soured his views of life and left him in doubt of all things. Invert every one of these propositions, and you have a Macaulay. He was, we readily concede it, inferior to Mill as a powerful and original thinker — less as a logician, less as an abstract philosopher. But he carried with him through life the most intense enjoyment of it; he was blest with affections for those nearly allied to him as warm and tender as ever touched the heart of man; he was harassed by no bitter or lawless passions; his sense of his own powers never swelled into vanity or affectation; everything amused and delighted him which set in motion the aerial shapes of his imagination; his conversation was the most brilliant and varied that had been heard for a century — if indeed anything like it was ever heard at all; and he held fast to manly, liberal, and enlightened principles, with a passionate earnestness which left no room for scepticism or despondency. These qualities may be traced in his writings, and they contributed largely to the charm with which he grouped the personages of history in the most picturesque and dramatic forms, giving to everything he touched the freshness of life. He has been accused of heightening the colours and exaggerating the attitudes he threw upon the canvas; but this was no more than the result of his own exuberant nature. He saw all things in strong light and shape, because there was sunshine on them all. Nothing was hazy or indistinct; nothing overcast with doubt or gloom.

This, however, is not the time or the place to expatiate in needless criticism or panegyric on Lord Macaulay's writings. They enjoy a popularity beyond the range of fiction, and they have merits which will fascinate the world when the most popular fictions of the day have ceased to please. Our business to-day is to trace, what his nephew well calls "the joyous and shining

* *The Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay.* By GEORGE OTTO TREVELYAN, Esq., M.P. 2 vols. 8vo. London; 1876.

pilgrimage" of their author through the world, and we rejoice that these volumes record in the familiar language of common life the warmth of heart, the enthusiasm, and the simplicity of character which were united in Lord Macaulay to the most marvellous attainments. No man was ever less anxious to obtrude his personal claims to distinction on the world. He cultivated literature as an art, but the artist was kept out of sight. His work was purely objective. Even in his speeches and in his conversation, and still more in his writings, the nature of his discourse, the subject of his descriptions, absorbed him altogether. His biographer justly remarks that it would be almost as hard to compose a picture of the author from his "History," his "Essays," and his "Lays," as to evolve an idea of Shakespeare from "Henry the Fifth" and "Measure for Measure." His manner of life, his habits of thought, his lively affections, were really known to those only who enjoyed his intimacy. With a vast acquaintance his bosom friends were few in number, and of these by far the nearest and dearest were the members of his own family. By them, or by their descendants, the veil of privacy which it pleased him to retain over his inner life is now removed, and this publication presents to his admirers a living picture of himself, traced to a considerable extent by his own hand.

Scotland may claim both John Mill and Macaulay as her descendants, but not as her children—or, if children, they were, in some respects, undutiful sons. Yet Macaulay paid his debt to the land of his forefathers by his splendid contributions to a journal which is identified with Scotland by its best and dearest traditions; and the most brilliant of his Parliamentary speeches were delivered by him as the representative of our Scottish capital. Something, no doubt, he owed to the fervour and daring of the old Highland spirit, shown in former generations by the ministers of the Kirk, his ancestors, whom Dr. Johnson met in the Hebrides; and Zachary Macaulay, his father, retained the type of his descent unaltered. Never lived there a man of a sterner or more undoubting faith, of a higher sense of

duty, of more indomitable industry in the great cause to which he devoted his existence—but he was absolutely devoid of those genial, imaginative, and humorous sympathies which, in despite of himself, shed such light and gaiety over his Cameronian household. Macaulay used to say that he derived his "joviality" from his mother, on the principle, we suppose, that it certainly did not come to him from his father. But his mother was a Quakeress, of Bristol extraction; his early education was conducted under the prim but benevolent eyes of Mrs. Hannah More. We must leave the champions of the rival influence of hereditary gifts and of educational authority to explain as best they may, the existence of a man who owed so little to his parents or to the position in which he was born.

We shall pass summarily over the period of baby hymns and juvenile epics, which streamed from the brain of this young prodigy almost as soon as he could speak or write. Mr. Trevelyan has wisely contented himself with a brief account of these performances, and has not given them to the public—a thing Macaulay himself would especially have abhorred, for he held that nothing ought to be brought to table but the ripe fruit of care and thought, and he held very cheap the crude efforts of his early life. Be it enough to say that when he went to Cambridge at eighteen, we already find him writing a vigorous and picturesque style, treating all subjects, himself included, with clear good sense, conversant with an astonishing amount of literature of all ages and languages, and thirsting for distinction in the liberal arts. He had not been sent to a public school, a circumstance which had perhaps allowed him a greater latitude and freedom in his studies, and when he entered Trinity College he entered upon the world. His first appearance in public life seems to have been at a Cambridge election, when the mob were hustling the successful candidates. His ardour was cooled by receiving a dead cat full in the face. The man who had thrown the missile assured him that it was by mistake, and that the cat was meant for Mr. Adeane. "I wish,"

said Macaulay, "that you had meant it for me and hit Mr. Adeane"—a joke worthy of an older politician.

Mr. Trevelyan has described with a tinge of hereditary sympathy the strong attachment of Macaulay for Cambridge, and above all for Trinity. That was indeed the starting-place and the goal, the very Mecca of his life; and it was there he received the impressions which formed and moulded his character and his intellect.

Of all his places of sojourn during his joyous and shining pilgrimage through the world, Trinity, and Trinity alone, had any share with his home in Macaulay's affection and loyalty. To the last he regarded it as an ancient Greek or a mediæval Italian felt towards his native city. As long as he had place and standing there, he never left it willingly or returned to it without delight. The only step in his course about the wisdom of which he sometimes expressed misgiving was his preference of a London to a Cambridge life. The only dignity that in his later days he was known to covet was an honorary fellowship which would have allowed him again to look through his window upon the college grass-plots, and to sleep within sound of the splashing of the fountain; again to breakfast on commons, and dine beneath the portraits of Newton and Bacon on the dais of the hall; again to ramble by moonlight round Neville's cloister dis-couraging the picturesque but somewhat ex-otic philosophy which it pleased him to call by the name of metaphysics. From the door of his rooms, along the wall of the chapel, there runs a flagged pathway which affords an acceptable relief from the rugged pebbles that surround it. Here as a bachelor of arts he would walk, book in hand, morning after morning throughout the long vacation, reading with the same eagerness and the same rapidity whether the volume was the most abstruse of treatises, the loftiest of poems, or the flimsiest of novels. That was the spot where in his failing years he specially loved to renew the feelings of the past, and some there are who can never revisit it without the fancy that there, if anywhere, his dear shade must linger.

The group of men he met there was remarkable—the present Lord Grey, Lord Belper and Lord Romilly, the three brothers Villiers, Praed, Moultrie, Sidney Walker, and above all, Charles Austin,

whose fame would now be more in proportion

to his extraordinary abilities had not his unparalleled success as an advocate tempted him before his day to retire from the toils of a career of whose rewards he had already enough. With his vigour and fervour, his depth of knowledge and breadth of humour, his close reasoning illustrated by an expansive imagination, set off, as these gifts were, by the advantage, at that period of life so irresistible, of some experience of the world at home and abroad,—Austin was indeed a king among his fellows.

Grave, sedate,

And, (if the looks may indicate the age,)

Our senior some few years;—no keener wit,

No intellect more subtle, none more bold,

Was found in all our host.

So writes Moultrie, and the testimony of his verse is borne out by John Stuart Mill's prose. "The impression he gave was that of boundless strength, together with talents which, combined with such apparent force of will and character, seemed capable of dominating the world." He certainly was the only man who ever succeeded in dominating Macaulay. Brimming over with ideas that were soon to be known by the name of utilitarian, a panegyrist of American institutions, and an unsparing assailant of ecclesiastical endowments and hereditary privileges, he effectually cured the young undergraduate of his Tory opinions, which were never more than skin deep, and brought him nearer to Radicalism than he ever was before or since. The report of this conversion, of which the most was made by ill-natured talebearers who met with more encouragement than they deserved, created some consternation in the family circle: while the reading set at Cambridge was duly scandalized at the influence which one whose classical attainments were rather discursive than exact had gained over a Craven scholar. To this hour men may be found in remote parsonages who mildly resent the fascination which Austin of Jesus exercised over Macaulay of Trinity.

No doubt a life of Lord Macaulay would be incomplete without some allusion to Charles Austin, and we thank Mr. Trevelyan for this courteous allusion to one who may in aftertimes be chiefly remembered as Macaulay's rival and friend. Austin surpassed Macaulay himself in powers of argumentative conversation. He was less discursive, more logical, and he launched shafts barbed with "the scorn of scorn" with a more unsparing hand. But he had infinitely less of poetic fire and human sympathy; less imagina-

tion, less of heart, and less of persistent ambition. His radical opinions subsided at last into a mild form of conservatism, and either from indolence or indifference to the world, he never took a pen in hand to leave behind him any trace of his great intellect. Hence he is remembered more for what he might have been than for what he was.

The day and the night together were too short for one who was entering on the journey of life amidst such a band of travellers. So long as a door was open or a light burning in any of the courts Macaulay was always in the mood for conversation and companionship. Unfailing in his attendance at lecture and chapel, blameless with regard to college laws and college discipline, it was well for his virtue that no curfew was in force within the precincts of Trinity. He never tired of recalling the days when he supped at midnight on milk-punch and roast turkey, drank tea in floods at an hour when older men are intent upon anything rather than on the means of keeping themselves awake, and made little of sitting over the fire till the bell rang for morning chapel in order to see a friend off by the early coach. In the license of the summer vacation, after some prolonged and festive gathering, the whole party would pour out into the moonlight and ramble for mile after mile through the country till the noise of their wide-flowing talk mingled with the twittering of the birds in the hedges which bordered the Coton pathway or the Madingley road. On such occasions it must have been well worth the loss of sleep to hear Macaulay plying Austin with sarcasms upon the doctrine of the greatest happiness, which then had still some gloss of novelty; putting into an ever-fresh shape the time-honoured jokes against the Johnians for the benefit of the Villierses; and urging an interminable debate on Wordsworth's merits as a poet, in which the Coleidges, as in duty bound, were ever ready to engage. In this particular field he acquired a skill of fence which rendered him the most redoubtable of antagonists. Many years afterwards, at the time when "The Prelude" was fresh from the press, he was maintaining against the opinion of a large and mixed society that the poem was unreadable. At last, overborne by the united indignation of so many of Wordsworth's admirers, he agreed that the question should be referred to the test of personal experience: and on inquiry it was discovered that the only individual present who had got through "The Prelude" was Macaulay himself.

It is not only that the witnesses of these scenes unanimously declare that they have never since heard such conversation in the most renowned of social circles. The partiality of a generous young man for trusted and admired companions may well colour his judgment over the space of even half a century. But the estimate of university contemporaries was abundantly confirmed by the

outer world. While on a visit to Lord Lansdowne at Bowood, Austin and Macaulay happened to get upon college topics one morning at breakfast. When the meal was finished they drew their chairs to either end of the chimney-piece, and talked at each other across the hearth-rug as if they were in a first-floor room in the Old Court of Trinity. The whole company, ladies, artists, politicians, and diners-out formed a silent circle round the two Cantabs, and, with a short break for lunch, never stirred till the bell warned them that it was time to dress for dinner.

It has all irrevocably perished. With life before them, and each intent on his own future, none among that troop of friends had the mind to play Boswell to the others.

Neither of these friendly disputants, certainly, wanted either *τόλμα* or *φρόνη*, which were regarded as the two first conditions of Attic oratory; but let posterity be consoled. We are old enough to have heard in our time a great deal of Austin's argumentative conversation, and opportunities were not wanting to us; but brilliant as it undoubtedly was, something of the reputation of these eminent talkers was due to the disposition of their audience. It is true, however, that conversation pitched in so high a key—so animated, so instructive, and so amusing—is not to be heard in modern society.

These literary conversations, followed by the animated debates of the Cambridge Union, in which Austin, Macaulay, Romilly, and Præd took the lead, probably contributed as much to the future success of these men as the lessons of their tutors. Macaulay's definition of a scholar was a man who could read Plato with his feet on the fender. He had himself no great share of that critical scholarship, then much in fashion, which raised a man to the bench of bishops by editing a Greek tragedy. But he had through life what is far better, a vast and lively acquaintance with Greek literature. Homer was as familiar to him as "Paradise Lost." During his retirement in India the Greek poets and orators were his constant companions. But at Cambridge his classical attainments earned for him no distinction except a Craven scholarship, to which he added on two occasions the chancellor's medal for English verse. He was not chosen a fellow of his college until his third trial, nominally for the strange reason that his translations from Greek and Latin into English were too bald and unadorned. When the Tripos of 1822 appeared his name was not in it; in short, Macaulay was "gulfed" (as his nephew expresses it), and he was disabled from contending

for the chancellor's classical medals. This failure, for such it was, was mainly due to his hatred of mathematics. Thus he exclaims to his mother in a letter written in 1818:—

I can scarcely bear to write on mathematics or mathematicians. Oh for words to express my abomination of that science, if a name sacred to the useful and embellishing arts may be applied to the perception and recollection of certain properties in numbers and figures! Oh that I had to learn astrology, or demonology, or school divinity! Oh that I were to pore over Thomas Aquinas, and to adjust the relation of entity with the two predicaments, so that I were exempted from this miserable study! "Discipline" of the mind! Say rather starvation, confinement, torture, annihilation! But it must be. I feel myself becoming a personification of algebra, a living trigonometrical canon, a walking table of logarithms. All my perceptions of elegance and beauty gone, or at least going. By the end of the term my brain will be "as dry as the remainder biscuit after a voyage." Oh to change Cam for Isis!

Perhaps the recollection of these disappointments tended to give him a low estimate of university honours, much as he loved his university. In his later years he wrote, "After all, what a man does at Cambridge is, in itself, nothing. If he makes a poor figure in life, his having been senior wrangler, or university scholar, is never mentioned but with derision. If he makes a distinguished figure, his early honours merge in those of later date." This opinion is, however, inconsistent with the arguments of his celebrated speech (delivered in 1855), in favour of competitive examination, when he entertained and amazed the House of Commons by a rapid enumeration of the performances of a score of senior wranglers. It was said of Macaulay by his most intimate and dearest friend, that he never really applied himself to any pursuit that was against the grain. Had he set his mind on taking high honours, he probably could have accomplished it. But his mind wanted those habits of severe application, governed by a strong will, without which no man can conquer the *reluctantes dracones* of life. For this same reason it was not in his destiny to become a great lawyer or a great statesman. He wanted for his growth the liberty of the broad fields of literature. There without an effort he could roam and rule. At this very time, in 1822, he competed with success for a prize of ten pounds, bequeathed by Mr. Greaves of Fulbourn for the best essay on the conduct and charac-

ter of William III. There was struck the keynote of his life. The essay is still in existence, and it shows that the junior bachelor of two and twenty thought and wrote with the same spirit as the grave historian of forty-eight.

In a passage that occurs towards the close of the essay may be traced something more than an outline of the peroration in which, a quarter of a century later on, he summed up the character and results of the Revolution of 1688. "To have been a sovereign, yet the champion of liberty; a revolutionary leader, yet the supporter of social order, is the peculiar glory of William. He knew where to pause. He outraged no national prejudice. He abolished no ancient form. *He altered no venerable name.* He saw that the existing institutions possessed the greatest capabilities of excellence, and that stronger sanctions and clearer definitions were alone required to make the practice of the British constitution as admirable as the theory. Thus he imparted to innovation the dignity and stability of antiquity. He transferred to a happier order of things the associations which had attached the people to their former government. As the Roman warrior, before he assaulted Veii, invoked its guardian gods to leave its walls, and to accept the worship and patronize the cause of the besiegers, this great prince, in attacking a system of oppression, summoned to his aid the venerable principles and deeply-seated feelings to which that system was indebted for protection."

There was in truth in Macaulay, though to judge by the results of his life no one would suppose it, a vast amount of indolence. His reading was universal, but he wandered like a bee over every blossom in the garden, and the wonder is that any honey was made. The following passage from a journal kept by his sister Margaret is extremely curious:—

March 30, 1831.—Tom has just left me, after a very interesting conversation. He spoke of his extreme idleness. He said: "I never knew such an idle man as I am. When I go in to Empson or Ellis their tables are always covered with books and papers. I cannot stick at anything for above a day or two. I mustered industry enough to teach myself Italian. I wish to speak Spanish. I know I could master the difficulties in a week, and read any book in the language at the end of a month, but I have not the courage to attempt it. If there had not been really something in me, idleness would have ruined me."

I said that I was surprised at the great accuracy of his information, considering how desultory his reading had been. "My accuracy as to facts," he said, "I owe to a cause which many men would not confess. It is due to my love of castle-building. The past is in my mind soon constructed into a romance."

He then went on to describe the way in which from his childhood his imagination had been filled by the study of history. "With a person of my turn," he said, "the minute touches are of as great interest, and perhaps greater, than the most important events. Spending so much time as I do in solitude, my mind would have rusted by gazing vacantly at the shop-windows. As it is, I am no sooner in the streets than I am in Greece, in Rome, in the midst of the French Revolution. Precision in dates, the day or hour in which a man was born or died, becomes absolutely necessary. A slight fact, a sentence, a word, are of importance in my romance. Pepys's "Diary" formed almost inexhaustible food for my fancy. I seem to know every inch of Whitehall. I go in at Hans Holbein's gate, and come out through the matted gallery. The conversations which I compose between great people of the time are long, and sufficiently animated: in the style, if not with the merits, of Sir Walter Scott's. The old parts of London, which you are sometimes surprised at my knowing so well, those old gates and houses down by the river, have all played their parts in my stories." He spoke, too, of the manner in which he used to wander about Paris, weaving tales of the Revolution, and he thought that he owed his command of language greatly to this habit.

On October 1, 1824, Macaulay was elected fellow of Trinity, which gave him a temporary independence, of essential value to him in the next seven years, and in 1826 he was called to the Bar, and joined the Northern Circuit at Leeds. But his study of law had been as perfunctory as his study of mathematics, and his legal career seems to have been confined to writing Aristophanic jests for the bar mess. Fortunately in 1828 Lord Lyndhurst, just at the close of the Goderich ministry, gave him a commissionership of bankruptcy, which raised his income to about a thousand a year.

Nothing in Macaulay's literary career excites in us more astonishment than his contributions to *Knights Magazine*, written when he was only three and four and twenty, whilst he was reading for this fellowship, which, with some little difficulty, he at last obtained. The "Fragment of a Roman Tale" (June 1823) breathes all the fire and tenderness of passionate love — a theme the writer never touched upon again; and perhaps it suggested to Bulwer the most graceful of the scenes in "The Last Days of Pompeii." The scenes from "Athenian Revels" reflect, as in a glass, the dramatic style of Plato and the daring wit of Aristophanes. The essays on the Italian writers show that Macaulay had already sounded the ocean depths of

Dante and traced to their source the brighter streams of Petrarch's song. The review of Mitford's "Greece" (November 1824) displays the same marvellous acquaintance with Hellenic politics and literature, and it winds up with a passage of splendid eloquence on the immortal influence of Athens. No doubt, it may be said, that these pages are overcrowded with allusions and images, which a more mature age would have restrained. But what clearness of thought! what abundance and what rhythm of language! That young author might have been addressed in the prophetic words applied by Socrates to Isocrates at about the same age. "He seems to me to have a genius above the oratory of Lysias and altogether to be tempered of nobler elements. And so it would not surprise me if, as years go on, he should make all his predecessors seem like children in the kind of oratory to which he is now addressing himself; or if — supposing this should not content him — some diviner impulse should lead him to greater things. My dear Phædros, a certain philosophy is inborn in him."* Already, at four and twenty, Macaulay was incontestably the first rhetorician of an age fertile in literary genius. Well might Jeffrey exclaim, as he did on the receipt of the first article written for this journal, "The more I think the less I can conceive where you picked up that style." Of the contributions with which Macaulay continued for many years to honour these pages, it would be unbecoming and superfluous for us to speak. Though he regarded them as fugitive productions, they have taken a prominent place in literature, and we know not how many millions of copies have been circulated in Britain and America, throughout the English-speaking world.

The Macaulay family migrated in 1823 to a large rambling house in Great Ormond Street, at the corner of Powis Place, a quarter of London which, though not fashionable, was still in those days inhabited by judges, barristers, and merchants. These were Tom Macaulay's London quarters until 1829 (when he went to live in chambers in Gray's Inn), and here the great critic and future orator and statesman passed, in the bosom of his family, the gayest years of his life. His spirits and his drollery were inexhaustible.

The fun that went on in Great Ormond Street was of a jovial, and sometimes uproarious, description. Even when the family was

* Plato, Phædros, *sup. fin.*

by itself, the schoolroom and the drawing-room were full of young people; and friends and cousins flocked in numbers to a resort where so much merriment was perpetually on foot. There were seasons during the school holidays when the house overflowed with noise and frolic from morning to night; and Macaulay, who at any period of his life could literally spend whole days in playing with children, was master of the innocent revels. Games of hide-and-seek, that lasted for hours, with shouting and the blowing of horns up and down the stairs and through every room, were varied by ballads, which, like the scalds of old, he composed during the act of recitation, while the others struck in with the chorus. He had no notion whatever of music, but an infallible ear for rhythm. His knack of improvisation he at all times exercised freely. The verses which he thus produced, and which he invariably attributed to an anonymous author whom he styled "the judicious poet," were exclusively for home consumption. Some of these effusions illustrate a sentiment in his disposition which was among the most decided, and the most frequently and loudly expressed. Macaulay was only too easily bored, and those whom he considered fools he by no means suffered gladly. He once amused his sisters by pouring out whole Iliads of extempore doggerel upon the head of an unfortunate country squire of their acquaintance who had a habit of detaining people by the button, and who was especially addicted to the society of the higher order of clergy.

His Grace Archbishop Manners Sutton
Could not keep on a single button.
As for Right Reverend John of Chester,
His waistcoats open at the breast are.
Our friend has filled a mighty trunk
With trophies torn from Doctor Monk,
And he has really tattered foully
The vestments of Archbishop Howley.
No button could I late discern on
The garments of Archbishop Vernon,
And never had his fingers mercy
Upon the garb of Bishop Percy.
The buttons fly from Bishop Ryder
Like corks that spring from bottled cyder,

and so on throughout the entire bench, until, after a good half-hour of hearty and spontaneous nonsense, the girls would go laughing back to their Italian and their drawing-boards.

Mr. Trevelyan, who has himself the family taste for this quaint sort of humour, has not scrupled to mix a good many specimens of this amusing doggerel with the graver matters of his book. We see no reason to blame him. They are as characteristic of his uncle as the highest flights of his rhetoric or his eloquence. They are the natural outburst of his amazing spirits, which could extract as much amusement from a street-ballad or a bad novel as from the wit of Boiardo and Aristophanes. And, after all, if many of the jokes are bad jokes, they are not worse than the puns and gibes on which the

name of Swift has conferred a lasting interest, and they are scrupulously free from Swift's vulgarity and coarseness. There never was a purer mind or more sensitive taste, in these respects, than that of Macaulay; and no doubt he owed this refinement partly to temperament, but far more to the circumstance that he had been brought up and spent his whole life, in the closest intimacy of friendship and sympathy with his sisters. Zachary Macaulay had five daughters and four sons; of whom Lord Macaulay was the eldest. Of the other sons it is unnecessary to speak. The daughters nearest to the age of their illustrious brother were, as far as we know, ladies educated in the strict opinions of the Clapham sect; but their brother always spoke of them with tender affection, and when Jane died he declared his heart was broken. Hannah More Macaulay, afterwards Lady Trevelyan, and Margaret, married to Mr. Edward Cropper, who died in 1834, though respectively ten and twelve years younger than their eldest brother, were his dearest playmates and associates. Lady Trevelyan was, of all the family, the member most congenial to himself. She shared his enthusiastic curiosity; she ranged like him through whole galleries of fiction, until it was said that she and her brother between them could have re-written "Sir Charles Grandison," and probably Miss Austen's novels to boot; she accompanied him to India; she returned with him to share the glory of his later years; and she bequeathed to her son the filial task of compiling this biography. We remember no other instance of so complete and unbroken a union of two persons in that charming relation of life. And the cause of this singularity is this, that Macaulay never, as far as we know, or as this book reveals to us, transferred his affections to any other woman. He seems never to have been in love; there is nowhere the slightest propensity to marriage; he does not appear even to have corresponded, or lived on terms of intimate friendship with any woman, outside his family circle. He liked the society of women—

When, in gilded drawing-rooms, thy breast
Swell to the sweeter sound of woman's praise.

He was warmly attached to those who, high in heart and intellect, shed a lustre alike on society and on domestic life, as the late Lady Stanhope and the present Duchess of Argyll; he was grateful to Lady Holland for her kindness, even when she wept and raved at his going to

India. But no woman appears ever to have exercised over him that irresistible charm, from which no other man of genius and feeling was ever, we believe, exempt. His heart, as it is termed, was given to his sisters alone; when Margaret died during his residence at Calcutta, he pours forth all the passionate grief of a lover, and declares he had almost lost his reason; henceforth Hannah and her children became and remained the sole objects of his affection.

The following passage describes his own intense feeling on this subject:—

The attachment between brothers and sisters [he writes in November 1832], blameless, amiable, and delightful as it is, is so liable to be superseded by other attachments that no wise man ought to suffer it to become indispensable to him. That women shall leave the home of their birth, and contract ties dearer than those of consanguinity, is a law as ancient as the first records of the history of our race, and as unchangeable as the constitution of the human body and mind. To repine against the nature of things, and against the great fundamental law of all society, because, in consequence of my own want of foresight, it happens to bear heavily on me, would be the basest and most absurd selfishness.

I have still one more stake to lose. There remains one event for which, when it arrives, I shall, I hope, be prepared. From that moment, with a heart formed, if ever any man's heart was formed, for domestic happiness, I shall have nothing left in this world but ambition. There is no wound, however, which time and necessity will not render endurable: and, after all, what am I more than my fathers, — than the millions and tens of millions who have been weak enough to pay double price for some favourite number in the lottery of life, and who have suffered double disappointment when their ticket came up a blank?

And he wrote in this strain at thirty-two!

These years, then, spent in Great Ormond Street, were chiefly employed in the duties of the Bankruptcy Court or on the Northern Circuit, where he held no brief, in writing a series of articles for this journal, some purely literary, and some directed with great force against the utilitarians of Queen Square, and in the keenest enjoyment of domestic life. The society of the Macaulay family was restricted to a few friends of the old Clapham set; their means were small; and genius had not yet broken through the wall which early habits had built round it. He had been obliged to sell the gold medals he won at Trinity, and even later he would sup on a bit of cheese sent him by a Wiltshire con-

stituent, with a glass of audit ale from the old college. But at one of the most critical moments of his life, and, as it turned out, of English history, all this changed. The Marquis of Lansdowne, quick above all men to discern indications of ability in literature or in art beyond the circle in which his rank and age placed him, and not less kind than prompt in raising young aspirants from obscurity to fame, discerned the genius of Macaulay in his writings, even before he knew the man.

Public affairs [writes Lady Trevelyan] were become intensely interesting to him. Canning's accession to power, then his death, the repeal of the Test Act, the emancipation of the Catholics, all in their turn filled his heart and soul. He himself longed to be taking his part in Parliament, but with a very hopeless longing.

In February 1830 I was staying at Mr. Wilberforce's at Highwood Hill when I got a letter from your uncle, enclosing one from Lord Lansdowne, who told him that he had been much struck by the articles on Mill, and that he wished to be the means of first introducing their author to public life, by proposing to him to stand for the vacant seat at Calne. Lord Lansdowne expressly added that it was your uncle's high moral and private character which had determined him to make the offer, and that he wished in no respect to influence his votes, but to leave him quite at liberty to act according to his conscience. I remember flying into Mr. Wilberforce's study, and, absolutely speechless, putting the letter into his hands. He read it with much emotion, and returned it to me, saying: "Your father has had great trials, obloquy, bad health, many anxieties. One must feel as if Tom were given him for a recompense." He was silent for a moment, and then his mobile face lighted up, and he clapped his hand to his ear, and cried: "Ah! I hear that shout again. Hear! hear! What a life it was."

And so on the eve of the most momentous conflict that ever was fought out by speech and vote within the walls of a senate-house, the young recruit went gaily to his post in the ranks of that party whose coming fortunes he was prepared loyally to follow, and the history of whose past he was destined eloquently, and perhaps imperishably, to record.

We know no second argument for borough influence so practical as this, that Calne, under the guidance of Lord Lansdowne, sent to the House of Commons within thirty years two such men as Thomas Macaulay and Robert Lowe, who might, and probably would, otherwise, have sought for seats in vain, or not ventured to seek for them at all.

On entering Parliament, in April 1830, Macaulay addressed the House on a bill

for the removal of Jewish disabilities, and once again on some other occasion; but he spoke no more; "doing more," as Mr. Trevelyan observes, "for future success in Parliament by silence, than he could have effected by half a dozen brilliant perorations." The time was at hand which was to give far greater occasions for his eloquence; and we do not know that any circumstance in Macaulay's career was more fortunate, than the accident which placed him in Parliament on the eve of the Reform agitation, but before it had begun. The Reform Bill was brought into the House by Lord John Russell on March 1, 1831. On the following day Macaulay delivered the first of his great speeches. It placed him at once in the first rank of Parliamentary orators. The excitement of the House knew no bounds. Men compared him to Fox, Burke, Canning, and Plunket—to the greatest masters of language and the noblest champions of liberty. And in the heat and fury of that great conflict, which was destined to regenerate by reform the constitution and the monarchy of England, none bore a more vigorous part than the young member from Calne. But we have here to speak less of his political achievements than of their personal results to himself.

We can assure Mr. Trevelyan, though he expresses an opposite opinion, that there was a vast deal more of the "exclusiveness of fashion" in 1831 than there is in 1876, for the sway of Lady Jersey, Lady Cowper, and Princess Lieven was an absolute despotism compared with the anarchy of the post-Reform period. Macaulay never aspired to be a man of fashion; he had too much pride and not enough vanity to be gratified by the flattery of people whom he despised. But it is curious to learn how far apart he had lived, even till he had passed his thirtieth year, from what is called the best society of London. Hence it was that whilst he remained singularly free from the levity and indifference of a man of the world, he never acquired the ease of manner, the lightness of touch, or the graces which accompany high breeding.

Macaulay had been well received in the character of an Edinburgh Reviewer, and his first great speech in the House of Commons at once opened to him all the doors in London that were best worth entering. Brought up, as he had been, in a household which was perhaps the strictest and the homeliest among a set of families whose creed it was to live outside the world, it put his strength of mind to the test when he found himself courted and

observed by the most distinguished and the most formidable personages of the day. Lady Holland listened to him with unwonted deference, and scolded him with a circumspection that was in itself a compliment. Rogers spoke of him with friendliness and to him with positive affection, and gave him the last proof of his esteem and admiration by asking him to name the morning for a breakfast-party. He was treated with almost fatherly kindness by the able and worthy man who is still remembered by the name of Conversation Sharp. Indeed, his deference for the feelings of all whom he liked and respected, which an experienced observer could detect beneath the eagerness of his manner and the volubility of his talk, made him a favourite among those of a generation above his own. He bore his honours quietly, and enjoyed them with the natural and hearty pleasure of a man who has a taste for society, but whose ambitions lie elsewhere. For the space of three seasons he dined out almost nightly, and spent many of his Sundays in those suburban residences which, as regards the company and the way of living, are little else than sections of London removed into a purer air.

The descriptions of his new social relations, written for the amusement of his sisters, are entertaining enough, and will be read with the interest which always clings to such reminiscences. But, inasmuch as the writer could paint every portrait but his own, even the conversation of Holland House loses much of its brilliancy when Macaulay's voice takes no part in it. Yet we must borrow one or two sketches.

London: July 11, 1831.

My dear Sister, — Since I wrote to you I have been out to dine and sleep at Holland House. We had a very agreeable and splendid party; among others the Duke and Duchess of Richmond, and the Marchioness of Clanricarde, who, you know, is the daughter of Canning. She is very beautiful, and very like her father, with eyes full of fire, and great expression in all her features. She and I had a great deal of talk. She showed much cleverness and information, but, I thought, a little more of political animosity than is quite becoming in a pretty woman. However, she has been placed in peculiar circumstances. The daughter of a statesman who was a martyr to the rage of faction may be pardoned for speaking sharply of the enemies of her parent: and she did speak sharply. With knitted brows, and flashing eyes, and a look of feminine vengeance about her beautiful mouth, she gave me such a character of Peel as he would certainly have had no pleasure in hearing.

In the evening Lord John Russell came; and, soon after, old Talleyrand. I had seen Talleyrand in very large parties, but had never been near enough to hear a word that he said.

I now had the pleasure of listening for an hour and a half to his conversation. He is certainly the greatest curiosity that I ever fell in with. His head is sunk down between two high shoulders. One of his feet is hideously distorted. His face is as pale as that of a corpse, and wrinkled to a frightful degree. His eyes have an odd glassy stare quite peculiar to them. His hair, thickly powdered and pomatumed, hangs down his shoulders on each side as straight as a pound of tallow candles. His conversation, however, soon makes you forget his ugliness and infirmities. There is a poignancy without effort in all he says, which reminded me a little of the character which the wits of Johnson's circle give of Beaucherk. For example, we talked about Metternich and Cardinal Mazarin. "*Fy trouvez beaucoup à redire. Le cardinal trompait; mais il ne mentait pas. Or, M. de Metternich ment toujours, et ne trompe jamais.*"

The same compliment, if it be one, that Talleyrand paid to the cardinal, might fairly be addressed to the most powerful and successful of living ministers.

The portraits of the host and hostess are uncommonly like.

London: July 25, 1831.

My dear Sister, — On Saturday evening I went to Holland House. There I found the Dutch ambassador, M. de Wesseburg, Mr. and Mrs. Vernon Smith, and Admiral Adam, a son of old Adam who fought the duel with Fox. We dined like emperors, and jabbered in several languages. Her ladyship, for an *esprit fort*, is the greatest coward that I ever saw. The last time that I was there she was frightened out of her wits by the thunder. She closed all the shutters, drew all the curtains, and ordered candles in broad day to keep out the lightning, or rather the appearance of the lightning. On Saturday she was in a terrible taking about the cholera; talked of nothing else; refused to eat any ice because somebody said that ice was bad for the cholera; was sure that the cholera was at Glasgow; and asked me why a cordon of troops was not instantly placed around that town to prevent all intercourse between the infected and the healthy spots. Lord Holland made light of her fears. He is a thoroughly good-natured, open, sensible man; very lively; very intellectual; well read in politics, and in the lighter literature both of ancient and modern times. He sets me more at ease than almost any person that I know, by a certain good-humoured way of contradicting that he has. He always begins by drawing down his shaggy eyebrows, making a face extremely like his uncle, wagging his head and saying: "Now do you know, Mr. Macaulay, I do not quite see that. How do you make it out?" He tells a story delightfully, and bears the pain of his gout and the confinement and privations to which it subjects him, with admirable fortitude and cheerfulness. Her ladyship is all

courtesy and kindness to me: but her demeanour to some others, particularly to poor Allen, is such as it quite pains me to witness. He is really treated like a negro slave. "Mr. Allen, go into my drawing-room and bring my reticule." "Mr. Allen, go and see what can be the matter that they do not bring up dinner." "Mr. Allen, there is not enough turtle soup for you. You must take gravy soup or none." Yet I can scarcely pity the man. He has an independent income, and, if he can stoop to be ordered about like a footman, I cannot so much blame her for the contempt with which she treats him.

Lord Grey was not very prompt to recognize the services which had been rendered to his government by the zeal and eloquence of this youthful ally. Office was notoriously of importance to Macaulay, and the sooner he was engaged in the active service of the government the better. Yet he was only offered at first a commissionership at the Board of Control, and it was not till the autumn of 1832 that he succeeded his friend Hyde Villiers in the secretaryship of that office. No doubt it was fortunate, as it turned out, that an official connection with the government of India was his first step in the public service. The following session, moreover, witnessed the passing of a most important India bill, which threw open the China trade; extinguished slavery in the British territories in the East; and made a considerable step towards the transfer of the sovereignty of India from the company to the crown. This measure was introduced by Mr. Charles Grant, as president of the Board of Control. But it had been in a great part prepared by Macaulay, and it was defended by him in the House with the most brilliant eloquence. The session of 1833, however, did not pass without many anxieties. Macaulay, himself, who sat for Leeds in the first Reform Parliament, was desponding. He saw "nothing before him but a frantic conflict of extreme opinions; then a short period of oppression; then a convulsive reaction; and then a tremendous crash of the funds, the Church, the peerage and the throne." Mr. Stanley's bill for the emancipation of the West-Indian negroes, based on a long period of apprenticeship, was strongly condemned by the zealous abolitionists, by Zachary Macaulay and by Macaulay himself. At this moment, with all his hopes of political power and influence bursting into life, whilst pecuniary embarrassments were gathering round his family to such an extent that for several years every penny Macaulay earned, beyond what the necessities of life demand-

ed, was devoted to paying off his father's creditors, with no professional income, and no means of subsistence but his pen, rather than support a measure which he conscientiously disapproved, Macaulay twice tendered his resignation. To the honour of the government it was not accepted, and he was allowed to stand aloof from the West India bill.

In the touching verses he wrote after his defeat at Edinburgh in 1847, the queen of gain, the queen of fashion, and the queen of power pass scornfully by his cradle, and leave the nursing to pursue a nobler and a happier aim,—

The sense of beauty and the thirst for truth.

Nothing could be more sincere. His indifference to gain was only modified by the desire to be generous to others, and he did not reckon the honours or amusements of the world amongst its real enjoyments. But it is singular that in 1833, after the extraordinary success of his earliest literary productions, it should not have occurred to him that he held between his fingers a power which might instantly create and command wealth, if not "beyond the dreams of avarice," yet certainly beyond his own wants. Had he devoted himself at once, and continuously, in 1833 to literary work—had he then commenced his "History," and brought out a volume a year, he might have realized as large a fortune as Sir Walter Scott, and probably far more than he brought back from India. But such was the simplicity of his character that this thought never struck him. It was with difficulty that he was persuaded to consent to the republication of his essays and articles—in themselves a fortune; and he seems to have thought there was something humiliating in degrading literature into a craft or profession.

Literary history is full of the miseries of authors. Macaulay knew every anecdote in existence of their privations and struggles. The affronts Dryden had endured from Tonson, the exigencies Mackintosh submitted to from Lardner. But he only discovered by long and late experience that in these times an author of genius, who manages his affairs with prudence, may realize gains quite equal to the returns of any other profession. It would probably have been to his own advantage, and certainly to the advantage of the world, if he had never been tempted to wander from the paths of literature into the beaten tracks of parliamentary and official life.

The India bill of 1833, which Macaulay had largely contributed to frame and to pass, contained a provision that one of the members of the Supreme Council at Calcutta should be appointed by the crown from among persons not being servants of the company. This office was called the legislative membership of council, and it was to be filled by a lawyer, chiefly with a view to improving and drafting the acts of the government of India. The salary was ten thousand a year, and to Macaulay himself, then in the thirty-fourth year of his life, this splendid post was offered. In an interesting letter to his sisters, which is too long to quote, he weighs the favourable and the adverse reasons. Money and office had in themselves no attraction for him; the most brilliant employment abroad was to him an almost intolerable exile. But he felt that the political prospects of his party were gloomy; he knew that the state of his father's affairs was disastrous; and he desired above all things to lay by a modest competency before he again embarked in public life. On these grounds he resolved to leave England, and he persuaded his sister Hannah to accompany him to Calcutta. Macaulay, to say the truth, knew but little of law and less of India—he had been a few times on the Northern Circuit, and he had sat for a few months at the Board of Control. This appointment gave a new direction to his powers, and studies, before repulsive, acquired a new interest. It is probable that we owe to Macaulay's Indian experience two of the most brilliant essays in the English language, which have brought the marvellous fabric of the British empire in the East visibly before millions of minds that had never thought of it before. But to Macaulay's dramatic genius the career of Clive and Warren Hastings—the triumph and the toil of the great Englishmen in India—was infinitely more captivating and attractive than the prodigious spectacle of India itself with its laws, its religions, its castes, its customs, its languages, dating from times when the British Isles were a swamp and a forest, inhabited by a barbarous race. It is extremely characteristic, that the chosen companions of his voyage to India were Richardson, Voltaire, Gibbon, Sismondi, Hallam, Don Quixote, Homer, and Horace, with a few books on jurisprudence and a couple of Persian and Hindostanee grammars. On the voyage he says, "I devoured Greek, Latin, Spanish, Italian, French, and English, folios, quartos, octavos, and duos.

decimos." We have no doubt of it; but we question whether Colebrooke's Institutes or the land-tenures of India had a very large share of his attention. Indeed, what must strike every reader with astonishment, is the vast amount of classical reading and research, to which, judging from these letters, Macaulay's time was habitually devoted at Calcutta.

"During the last thirteen months I have read *Æschylus* twice; *Sophocles* twice; *Euripides* once; *Pindar* twice; *Callimachus*; *Apollonius Rhodius*; *Quintus Calaber*; *Theocritus* twice; *Herodotus*; *Thucydides*; almost all *Xenophon's* works; almost all *Plato*; *Aristotle's* "Politics," and a good deal of his "Organon," besides dipping elsewhere in him; the whole of *Plutarch's* "Lives;" about half of *Lucian*; two or three books of *Athenæus*; *Plautus* twice; *Terence* twice; *Lucretius* twice; *Catullus*; *Tibullus*; *Propertius*; *Lucan*; *Statius*; *Silius Italicus*; *Livy*; *Velleius Paterculus*; *Sallust*; *Cæsar*; and, lastly, *Cicero*. I have, indeed, still a little of *Cicero* left; but I shall finish him in a few days. I am now deep in *Aristophanes* and *Lucian*."

That the enormous list of classical works recorded in the foregoing letter was not only read through, but read with care, is proved by the pencil-marks, single, double, and treble, which meander down the margin of such passages as excited the admiration of the student; and by the remarks, literary, historical, and grammatical, with which the critic has interspersed every volume, and sometimes every page. In the case of a favourite writer, Macaulay frequently corrects the errors of the press, and even the punctuation, as minutely as if he were preparing the book for another edition. He read *Plautus*, *Terence*, and *Aristophanes* four times through at Calcutta; and *Euripides* thrice. In his copy of *Quintus Calaber*, (a versifier who is less unknown by the title of *Quintus Smyrnæus*,) appear the entries

"September 22, 1835.

Turned over, July 13, 1837."

It may be doubted whether the *Pandects* would have attained the celebrity which they enjoy, if, in the course of the three years during which *Justinian's* law commission was at work, the president *Tribonian* had read *Quintus Smyrnæus* twice.

The Indian empire is a subject so vast and so profound, even to those whose lives have been spent in its service, that it is not too much to ask of the most gifted members of the Indian government that they should give it all their attention. But though Macaulay's knowledge of India was superficial, it would be unjust to suppose that his presence in the council was not of great value. He brought to Indian administration an intelligence, admirably

stored by study and experience, with the most enlightened views of government; and his minutes are models of good judgment and practical sagacity. The part he took in India was essentially the application of sound liberal principles to a government which had till then been singularly jealous, close, and repressive. Thus he vindicated with the greatest energy the liberty of the Indian press, he maintained the equality of Europeans and natives before the law, and he gave an impulse to the work of education, to which the prodigious progress of the native races in the last thirty years, through the study of the English language, is mainly attributable. His greatest legislative work, in his own judgment, was the draft of a penal code—a subject which required less special technical knowledge of India than many others—for the rules of evidence and the definitions of offences might be common to all mankind. But twenty-two years elapsed before this code was promulgated. It was revised with great care and labour by experienced lawyers, and it owes a good deal to other hands, more especially to *Sir Barnes Peacock*, by whom it was at last brought into operation. *Mr. Trevelyan* quotes the high authority of *Mr. Fitzjames Stephen* in support of the fact that Macaulay had, somehow or other, acquired a very considerable knowledge of English criminal law, however little he had practised it. All these enlightened measures and reforms drew down on him a torrent of abuse, especially from the English society in Calcutta and the *Mofussil*, to which he seems to have been entirely indifferent. And as he strolled up and down his garden at early dawn or in the full splendour of Indian moonlight, his mind became gradually more and more indifferent to politics. What, he said, is the fame of *Townshend* to that of *Hume*, of *Lord North* to that of *Gibbon*, of *Lord Chatham* to that of *Johnson*?

I am more than half determined to abandon politics, and to give myself wholly to letters; to undertake some great historical work which may be at once the business and the amusement of my life; and to leave the pleasures of pestiferous rooms, sleepless nights, aching heads, and diseased stomachs to *Roebuck* and to *Praed*.

At the close of 1837 Macaulay embarked with his sister and her husband in the "Lord Hungerford" East Indiaman to return to England. The voyage was long and stormy. *Zachary Macaulay* died in May 1838, before his children reached

their native shore. The first business which awaited the returning legislator was a literary quarrel, that threatened to end in a duel. Lord Brougham had assumed towards Macaulay an attitude which boded no good. And, above all, the prospects of the political party with which Macaulay was so closely connected by principle and by regard were extremely depressing. We have read with curiosity and interest the remarks of Mr. Trevelyan on the causes which led to the fall of Lord Melbourne's government, differing as they do very widely from the impressions we ourselves retain of that event. But whatever those causes were, the fact is, certain that a reaction had quickly succeeded to the violent emotions of the Reform agitation; that the party and the Parliament which had carried so many great measures, was soon broken up, partly by the secession of its more conservative members, but much more by the imprudent pressure of its radical adherents. At the moment of King William's death the cabinet was on the verge of defeat. It was rescued for a time by the popularity and Whig proclivities of the young queen. But we regard it as a misfortune to the Whig party that the existence of the ministry was prolonged after it had lost its power; and certainly there never was a moment less calculated to encourage a Whig statesman to resume his connection with public affairs.

Macaulay proceeded to make a tour of Italy in the autumn following his return. He visited that country, as his nephew justly remarks, with the eyes of an historian, but he had a faint appreciation of the beauties of natural scenery and still less of the great works of mediæval art. The charm of those portions of his Italian journals which are given to the reader consists in the vast array of historical associations which those spots, consecrated by the heroism of ages, awakened in his memory. And it is probable that he here first conceived the idea of those Roman ballads which he afterwards executed with such singular felicity.* A proposal

from Lord Melbourne to take the office of judge advocate followed him to Florence in November 1838, but the offer "did not strike him as even tempting," and was declined.

In Rome Macaulay had met Mr. Gladstone, then the rising hope of the Tory party. Oddly enough his first task on returning to London was to read and review Mr. Gladstone's "Essay on Church and State," which he did with the exclamation, "The Lord hath delivered him into our hand;" and certainly never was a crude theory more mercilessly demolished. Mr. Gladstone acted on the principle that a soft answer turneth away wrath, for he addressed his critic in the following terms:—

"I have been favoured with a copy of the forthcoming number of the *Edinburgh Review*; and I perhaps too much presume upon the bare acquaintance with you, of which alone I can boast, in thus unceremoniously assuming you to be the author of the article entitled 'Church and State,' and in offering you my very warm and cordial thanks for the manner in which you have treated both the work, and the author on whom you deigned to bestow your attention. In whatever you write you can hardly hope for the privilege of most anonymous productions, a real concealment; but, if it had been possible not to recognize you, I should have questioned your authorship in this particular case, because the candour and singlemindedness which it exhibits are, in one who has long been connected in the most distinguished manner with political party, so rare as to be almost incredible. . . . In these lacerating times one clings to everything of personal kindness in the past, to husband it for the future; and, if you will allow me, I shall earnestly desire to carry with me such a recollection of your mode of dealing with a subject upon which the attainment of truth, we shall agree, so materially depends upon the temper in which the search for it is instituted and conducted."

How much this letter pleased Macaulay is indicated by the fact of his having kept it unburned; a compliment which, except in this single instance, he never paid to any of his correspondents.

The elevation of Mr. Abercromby, the speaker, to the peerage, in May 1838, left a seat for Edinburgh vacant, and the Liberal constituency of our ancient city willingly accepted Macaulay as their candidate. He conciliated the Radicals by adopting the ballot, but in all other respects his political creed consisted in an emphatic renewal of his devoted attachment

* Some of these "Lays" must already have been composed in his mind, for he says: "I then went towards the river, to the spot where the old Pons Sublicius stood and looked about to see *how my Horatius* agreed with the topography. Pretty well; but his house must be on Mount Palatinus, for he never could see Mount Cælius from the spot where he fought." This evidently refers to the passage,—

But he saw on Palatinus
The white porch of his home,
And he spake to the noble river
That rolls by the walls of Rome.

Yet his brother Charles seems to have supposed that

the "Lays" were composed after his return to England.

to Whig principles. The passage, in these days, it may be well to quote.

"I look with pride," said Macaulay, "on all that the Whigs have done for the cause of human freedom and of human happiness. I see them now hard pressed, struggling with difficulties, but still fighting the good fight. At their head I see men who have inherited the spirit and the virtues, as well as the blood, of old champions and martyrs of freedom. To those men I propose to attach myself. While one shred of the old banner is flying, by that banner will I, at least, be found. Whether in or out of Parliament — whether speaking with that authority which must always belong to the representative of this great and enlightened community, or expressing the humble sentiments of a private citizen — I will to the last maintain inviolate my fidelity to principles which, though they may be borne down for a time by senseless clamour, are yet strong with the strength, and immortal with the immortality, of truth; and which, however they may be misunderstood or misrepresented by contemporaries, will assuredly find justice from a better age."

The day came, even in Edinburgh, when the enthusiasm excited by this patriotic language was forgotten; but the day never came when Macaulay flinched from those principles; and the day will never come when those who follow, at however great a distance, in his footsteps, will forsake them.

It was not long before Macaulay was called upon to make a considerable sacrifice to his sense of public duty. The most cherished desire of his heart had been to devote himself, on his return to England, to some great literary work, for in his eyes all that he had hitherto achieved was desultory and ephemeral. He applied himself, indeed, with fresh energy to the review, and it was at this time that the splendid articles on Clive and Warren Hastings were written, to be followed by many others. But the *magnum opus* he had in view — the work which was to hand down his name to posterity, and perhaps be read and admired at the distance of a thousand years, was his English history. The plan was already framed in his mind, though in proportions very different from those which it afterwards assumed; and on March 9, 1839, it appears from his journal that he wrote a portion of the introduction. "Pretty well," was his own note upon it, "but a little too stately and rhetorical." But before the close of September he received a letter from Lord Melbourne, with an offer of the secretaryship at war and a seat in the Cabinet. No doubt to attain to a place in the executive

government of England before a man is forty, by sheer force of intellect, is a triumph and a temptation which few men of strong political feelings and ambition could resist. But in accepting office Macaulay added nothing to his own fame. He had no inducement to accept it but the consciousness that it was his duty to support what he knew to be a falling government. His powers of debate were wasted in violent and fruitless altercations, and his duties as secretary at war might have been as well performed by a chief clerk of the department. In one respect his short ministerial career was remarkable. He gave a strenuous support to Lord Palmerston in the transactions of 1840 which nearly led to war with France; and he did not side with the dissentient voices in the Cabinet, though amongst them were several names dearest to the Whig party and to himself. The struggle of the Cabinet was not of long duration. In less than two years the Melbourne ministry fell, and Macaulay was liberated from office.

He wrote at this time to Macvey Napier: —

I am not at all disappointed by the elections. They have, indeed, gone very nearly as I expected. Perhaps I counted on seven or eight votes more; and even these we may get on petition. I can truly say that I have not, for many years, been so happy as I am at present. Before I went to India, I had no prospect in the event of a change of government, except that of living by my pen, and seeing my sisters governesses. In India I was an exile. When I came back, I was for a time at liberty; but I had before me the prospect of parting in a few months, probably forever, with my dearest sister and her children. That misery was removed; but I found myself in office, a member of a government wretchedly weak, and struggling for existence. Now I am free. I am independent. I am in Parliament, as honourably seated as man can be. My family is comfortably off. I have leisure for literature; yet I am not reduced to the necessity of writing for money. If I had to choose a lot from all that there are in human life, I am not sure that I should prefer any to that which has fallen to me. I am sincerely and thoroughly contented.

These agreeable prognostications were to a great extent realized. Eighteen years of life still remained to him, and he spent them in full and unbroken enjoyment. His influence in Parliament was considerable, and on more than one occasion he turned the opinion of the House, by the incomparable ingenuity of his arguments. He lost his seat for Edinburgh indeed, but that was the result of a proud and

manly adherence to principle and to his determination never to degrade the character of a representative. Although he gradually withdrew from general society, and was bored by the vacuity of country-houses and big dinners, he clung more closely to the intercourse of his relations and intimate friends; and meanwhile the history steadily, though slowly, advanced.

It is this period of Macaulay's life which offers the greatest interest to those of the present generation who enjoyed his society, and Mr. Trevelyan has fortunately preserved to us considerable portions of his daily journal at this time. The events recorded are indeed slight and few, but the picture of that animated and accomplished company of kindred minds is full of brilliancy and truth. It was an age of social breakfasts. Macaulay himself preferred a party of friends, assembled at a breakfast-table to eat muffins and broiled salmon, to any other mode of entertainment; and if he did not set the fashion, he certainly adopted it with great cordiality and gave it an unusual charm. Hallam, Sydney Smith, Lord Carlisle, Lord Stanhope, M. Van de Weyer, Senior, and Bishop Wilberforce shared this taste, and the breakfasts were incessant at their respective houses. Bright as those mornings always were, the brightest were the days on which Macaulay appeared, or on which he assembled the same party at the Albany or on Campden Hill. Rogers' breakfasts were a thing apart, for at them the chief object of the host seemed to be to exhibit himself and tell his own stories over again, with the well-known fall of the lip or the anticipated tear. But Macaulay's parties were perfectly natural and unaffected, the conversation was spontaneous and unprepared; yet involuntarily the circle found itself drawing closer round the magician's chair.

So charming left his voice that they awhile
Though him still speaking, still stood fixed to hear.

Not less congenial to Macaulay were the dinners of "The Club"—that remarkable society founded in 1764 by Sir Joshua Reynolds and Dr. Johnson, which has numbered amongst its members the best talkers of a century, but certainly none more brilliant than him who was elected on March 19, 1839. For twenty years Macaulay constantly attended these dinners, which are held on alternate Tuesdays during the session. He was there completely in his element. Each of the guests was ear and voice to the others.

Lord Carlisle's journal has preserved a few shadowy records of these delightful meetings, but, whatever else the club may have retained, the spirit of Boswell has ceased to haunt it. Mr. Trevelyan speaks of "The Club" in the past tense, as if he supposed that after the dissolution of so brilliant a company, nothing survived. We beg to assure him that he is mistaken. "*Esto perpetua*" is the motto of the club, and we hope that the time will never arrive when English gentlemen are wanting to support its literary and social traditions.

Whatever fault might be found with Macaulay's gestures as an orator, his appearance and bearing in conversation were singularly effective. Sitting bolt upright, his hands resting on the arms of his chair or folded over the handle of his walking-stick;—knitting his great eyebrows if the subject was one which had to be thought out as he went along, or brightening from the forehead downwards when a burst of humour was coming;—his massive features and honest glance suited well with the manly sagacious sentiments which he set forth in his pleasant sonorous voice, and in his racy and admirably intelligible language. To get at his meaning people had never the need to think twice, and they certainly had seldom the time. And with all his ardour, and with all his strength and energy of conviction, he was so truly considerate towards others, so delicately courteous with the courtesy which is of the essence and not only in the manner! However eager had been the debate, and however prolonged the sitting, no one in the company ever had personal reasons for wishing a word of his unsaid, or a look or a tone recalled. His good things were never long in the making. During the Caffre war, at a time when we were getting rather the worst of it, he opened the street door for a walk down Westbourne Terrace. "The blacks are flying," said his companion. "I wish they were in South Africa," was the instant reply. His quotations were always ready, and never off the mark. He was always willing to accept a friendly challenge to a feat of memory. One day, in the Board-room of the British Museum, Sir David Dundas saw him hand to Lord Aberdeen a sheet of foolscap covered with writing arranged in three parallel columns down each of the four pages. This document, of which the ink was still wet, proved to be a full list of the senior wranglers at Cambridge with their dates and colleges, for the hundred years during which the names of senior wranglers had been recorded in the university calendar. On another occasion Sir David asked: "Macaulay, do you know your popes?" "No," was the answer; "I always get wrong among the Innocents." "But can you say your Archbishops of Canterbury?" "Any fool," said Macaulay, "could say his Archbishops of Canterbury back-

wards : " and he went off at score, drawing breath only once in order to remark on the oddity of there having been an Archbishop Sancroft and an Archbishop Bancroft, until Sir David stopped him at Cranmer.

Macaulay was proud of his good memory, and had little sympathy with people who affected to have a bad one. In a note on the margin of one of his books he reflects upon this not uncommon form of self-depreciation : " They appear to reason thus : The more memory, the less invention."

Yet he had himself remarked on another occasion that it was dangerous for a man of strong memory to read too much, because in acquiring an amazing command over the thoughts of others, he might dilute the power of original thought in himself. That was undoubtedly to some extent the case with Macaulay. Every incident he heard of, every page he read, assumed in his mind a concrete, objective, spectral form. He *saw* them before him : but his genius was less conversant with abstract truths or their relations. These qualities made his writings and conversation eminently graphic, clear, and attractive, rather than profound studies of human nature or of the causes of events. To this distinction between the most brilliant modern writer of history and the great models of antiquity, especially Thucydides and Tacitus, Macaulay was by no means insensible : it originates in a different order of mind and in far other powers of original thought. The historian of antiquity to whom his writings bear the nearest resemblance is Livy.

Macaulay never worked at anything so hard as he laboured at his "History." His method of composition was slow and toilsome ; his care and correctness, both as to matter and style, endless. His researches to ascertain facts, even of trifling importance, were extraordinary. Yet the bulk of the materials he used were derived from printed sources — memoirs, pamphlets, sermons, ballads, broadsheets, Parliamentary journals and the statute-book. He seldom attempted to dive into that ocean of manuscript records, which threatens to bury the sources of history under strata of rubbish ; but he made considerable use of the Dutch and Spanish despatches, and of Narcissus Luttrell's diary, then unpublished. He was also aided by the previous researches of Mackintosh. The work of preparing the materials of history, and that of writing actual history, must be performed by two distinct classes of men. All experience shows

how impossible it is to attain to complete and indisputable accuracy even in the narrative of an ordinary contemporary event. With every fresh witness, with every fresh piece of evidence, the difficulty increases. We speak with confidence of the history of the ancients, because the witnesses are few in number : but the more we know, the more we doubt. Macaulay laboured with an honest and intense desire to be truthful and just, though he wrote under the influence of strong predilections ; and his slips of memory are exceedingly rare. One of these is curious. We had occasion in reviewing the first volumes of his "History" to point out that he was mistaken in conferring on Schomberg, who was killed at the battle of the Boyne, a grave in Westminster Abbey. It now turns out from a journal of a tour in Ireland, made for the express purpose of visiting the scenes memorable in the history of those times, that Macaulay actually saw the tomb of Schomberg in St. Patrick's, Dublin, and noted Swift's savage inscription on it. This must have escaped his recollection.

Early in 1849, in the midst of events which convulsed Europe with new revolutions, this great history of an old and triumphant revolution was given to the world. It is needless to say how it was received — the sale of edition after edition was rapid and enormous. It was read with enthusiasm by all classes ; for if it contained some of the noblest passages of historical composition to instruct the statesman and delight the scholar, it was amusing enough to divert the frivolous, and clear enough to give pleasure and knowledge to the uneducated. Whatever Macaulay's hopes of success or consciousness of desert may have been, the results exceeded all expectation. In one instance alone was a serious attempt made to depreciate the merit and detract from the influence of the greatest historical work of our time. A contemporary reviewer, writing with the deliberation and judgment required on such an occasion, declared that —

Mr. Macaulay was a grand proficient in the picturesque, but a very poor professor of the historic. These volumes have been, and the future volumes as they may appear will be, devoured with the same eagerness that "Oliver Twist," or "Vanity Fair" excite, with the same quality of zest, though perhaps with a higher degree of it : but his pages will *seldom*, we think, *receive a second perusal* ; and the work, we apprehend, will *hardly find a perma-*

ment place on the historical shelf, nor ever, assuredly, be quoted as authority on any question or point of the history of England.*

Such criticism could do Macaulay no harm, and as was said at the time, the writer of the article in attempting murder had committed suicide. But in his private journal, the historian made the following remark.

April 13. — To the British Museum. I looked over the "Travels" of the Duke of Tuscany, and found the passage the existence of which Croker denies. His blunders are really incredible. The article has been received with general contempt. Really Croker has done me a great service. I apprehended a strong reaction, the natural effect of such a success; and, if hatred had left him free to use his very slender faculties to the best advantage, he might have injured me much. He should have been large in acknowledgment; should have taken a mild and expostulatory tone; and should have looked out for real blemishes, which, as I too well know, he might easily have found. Instead of that, he has written with such rancour as to make everybody sick. I could almost pity him. But he is a bad, a very bad, man: a scandal to politics and to letters.

From that day to this, the same journal has never lost an opportunity of launching shafts against the literary reputation of Lord Macaulay. Mr. Croker is dead, but the race of Crokers is not extinct, nor is it likely to expire as long as the principal organ of the Tory party sedulously keeps it alive.

It is certainly not a matter of regret that Macaulay was relieved for some years from the fatigue of Parliament. In 1852, when the Whigs returned to office, he refused a seat in the Cabinet; but when it was proposed in June of the same year to put him in nomination for Edinburgh, the compliment of a voluntary *amende* paid by so great a constituency was not unwelcome to him. His own bearing was high and rigid. He had made no advance and no concession. But Edinburgh, to her honour, was glad to take him back on his own terms. Unhappily the time was already past for Macaulay to render to his constituents or his country any important political services. Within two days of the election and before he could go down to Scotland, on July 15, 1852, he felt suddenly oppressed with an exceeding weakness and languor. Dr. Bright was called in and pronounced that he was suffering from seriously deranged action of the

heart. From that moment the exertions of public life became extremely painful and onerous to him, and at times he was scarcely able to write — as he himself expressed it, he had aged twenty years in a single week. The case was a singular one: a man of fifty-two, scarcely past the prime of life, of temperate habits, given to daily exercise and regular hours, who had never been ill, suddenly found his powers of life impaired, and felt that, although he might linger for some years, the "strict arrest of the fell serjeant, death," was on him.

"December 31, 1853. — Another day of work and solitude. I enjoy this invalid life extremely. In spite of my gradually sinking health, this has been a happy year. My strength is failing. My life will not, I think, be long. But I have clear faculties, warm affections, abundant sources of pleasure."

At very distant intervals, he gives expression, in two or three pathetic sentences, to the dejection which is the inevitable attendant upon the most depressing of all ailments. "I am not what I was, and every month my heart tells it me more and more clearly. I am a little low; not from apprehension; for I look forward to the inevitable close with perfect serenity: but from regret for what I love. I sometimes hardly command my tears when I think how soon I must leave them. I feel that the fund of life is nearly spent."

His temper was unruffled by the thought that the great work he had commenced, and which he once hoped to bring down "to a period of living memory," must remain incomplete. Nothing but expressions of gratitude ever passed his lips, for the happiness of the life he had enjoyed. Enough for him to work on whilst it was yet day; and to persevere with unbroken industry, good humour, and benevolence to the end. Once he spoke in Parliament in favour of retaining the master of the rolls in the House of Commons, and again in defence of the competitive system of appointments to India; but he felt all the time that it was grievous waste of strength, with the reign of Anne still unwritten, for him to consume his scanty stock of vigour in the tedious and exhausting effort of political debate.

The desire of literary fame was certainly one of Macaulay's strongest passions. To be ranked with those great writers who had shed a glory and a joy over his own existence — to be read by future ages and distant countries — to be incorporated With that dear language which I spake like thee, —

were results intensely gratifying to his

* *Quarterly Review*, March 1849.

imagination. He lived to enjoy these as fully as a man can enjoy, or taste, the pleasures of posthumous fame, by anticipated distinction. Yet he was not prone to exaggerate his own importance, and he looked at it, willingly enough, from the comical side. Thus he writes in March 1850:—

At last I have attained true glory. As I walked through Fleet Street the day before yesterday, I saw a copy of Hume at a bookseller's window with the following label: "Only 2s. 2s. Hume's 'History of England' in eight volumes, highly valuable as an introduction to Macaulay." I laughed so convulsively that the other people who were staring at the books took me for a poor demented gentleman. Alas for poor David! As for me, only one height of renown yet remains to be attained. I am not yet in Madame Tussaud's waxwork.

I have seen the hippopotamus, both asleep and awake; and I can assure you that, awake or asleep, he is the ugliest of the works of God. But you must hear of my triumphs. Thackeray swears that he was eye-witness and ear-witness of the proudest event of my life. Two damsels were just about to pass that doorway which we, on Monday, in vain attempted to enter, when I was pointed out to them. "Mr. Macaulay!" cried the lovely pair. "Is that Mr. Macaulay? Never mind the hippopotamus." And, having paid a shilling to see behemoth, they left him in the very moment at which he was about to display himself to them, in order to see—but spare my modesty. I can wish for nothing more on earth, now that Madame Tussaud, in whose pantheon I once hoped for a place, is dead.

Or, to quote another form of honour paid to his memory—that perhaps which he would himself most highly have appreciated—amongst the national relics in the British Museum a few lines traced by his hand have been deemed worthy to find a place, as one of the choicest of our treasures.

A manuscript page of his "History," thickly scored with dashes and erasures,—it is the passage in the twenty-fifth chapter where Sir Hans Sloane is mentioned as "the founder of the magnificent museum which is one of the glories of our country,"—is preserved at that museum in a cabinet, which may truly be called the place of honour; within whose narrow limits are gathered together a rare collection of objects such as Englishmen of all classes and parties regard with a common reverence and pride. There may be seen Nelson's hasty sketch of the line of battle at the Nile; and the sheet of paper on which Wellington computed the strength of the cavalry regiments that were to fight at Waterloo; and the note-book of Locke; and the auto-

graphs of Samuel Johnson's "Irene," and Ben Jonson's "Masque of Queens;" and the rough copy of the translation of the "Iliad," written, as Pope loved to write, on the margin of frayed letters and the backs of tattered envelopes. It is pleasant to think what Macaulay's feelings would have been, if, when he was rhyming and castle-building among the summer-houses at Barley Wood, or the laurel-walks at Aspenden, or under the limes and horse-chestnuts in the Cambridge Gardens, he could have been assured that the day would come when he should be invited to take his place in such a noble company.

But indeed no form of human honour and reward was wanting to his success. The Institute of France conferred on him the rank of an associate. Oxford made him a doctor of laws. The town council of Cambridge elected him in 1857 to the high-stewardship of the borough—an honorary office which had been held by the protector Somerset, by Bacon, by Oliver Cromwell, and by Clarendon. The members of the Prussian Order of Merit elected him a knight. And soon after his health compelled him to retire from the representation of Edinburgh, the queen raised him to the rank of a peer of England—the first example of a peerage bestowed on literary genius, for at the time it was granted Macaulay had ceased to be a politician. It was, however, not unwelcome to him that this mark of the queen's favour was conferred by the hand of Lord Palmerston. Though Lord Palmerston was certainly not a representative of Whig opinions, but rather of the liberal side of Toryism, his high-spirit, his pluck, and vigour in action had always exercised a powerful attraction over the mind of Macaulay. In 1852, when he was dismissed from the Foreign Office, Macaulay wrote in his journal:—

December 24.—Palmerston is out. It was high time; but I cannot help being sorry. A daring, indefatigable, high-spirited man; but too fond of conflict, and too ready to sacrifice everything to victory when once he was in the ring.

In fact Macaulay liked Lord Palmerston, not only in spite of his defects, but in some degree for his defects, which warmed his imagination. It was therefore with peculiar pleasure that he received his peerage from so friendly a hand. He took his seat with modest pride beside the representatives of the historic families of England, whose forefathers were to him better known than his own contemporaries. But his elevation to the peerage produced no other results. He never spoke in the

House of Lords, for though he had once prepared an answer to Lord Ellenborough on some Indian question, the opportunity passed and the speech was not delivered.

Scarcely any portion of these volumes will be read with greater interest than the record of the years (chiefly under Macaulay's own hand), which were spent in the steady prosecution of his historical labours. Yet there are no events to record — nothing but the play of his own mind and fancy, the pursuit of a noble object, and numberless touches of humour, tenderness, and generosity, which endear him more and more to us. These we must rapidly pass by: but the success of the second instalment of his great work must be commemorated, for it was the most extraordinary occurrence of the kind not only in his own life, but in all literary history.

On the 21st of November 1855, he writes: "I looked over and sent off the last twenty pages. My work is done, thank God; and now for the result. On the whole, I think that it cannot be very unfavourable. At dinner I finished 'Melpomene.'" The first effect upon Macaulay of having completed an instalment of his own "History" was now, as in 1848, to set him reading Herodotus.

"November 23. — Longman came. All the twenty-five thousand copies are ordered. Monday, the 27th of December, is to be the day; but on the evening of the preceding Saturday those booksellers who take more than a thousand are to have their books. The stock lying at the bookbinders' is insured for ten thousand pounds. The whole weight is fifty-six tons. It seems that no such edition was ever published of any work of the same bulk. I earnestly hope that neither age nor riches will narrow my heart."

"November 29. — I was again confined to my room all day, and again dawdled over my book. I wish that the next month were over. I am more anxious than I was about the first part, for then I had no highly-raised expectations to satisfy, and now people expect so much that the seventh book of Thucydides would hardly content them. On the other hand, the general sterility, the miserably enervated state of literature, is all in my favour. We shall see. It is odd that I should care so very little about the money, though it is full as much as I made by banishing myself for four and a half of the best years of my life to India."

On the last day of February 1856, Macaulay writes in his journal: "Longman called. It is necessary to reprint. This is wonderful. Twenty-six thousand five hundred copies sold in ten weeks! I should not wonder if I made twenty thousand pounds clear this year by literature. Pretty well, considering that, twenty years ago, I had just nothing when my debts were paid; and all that I have, with the exception of a small part left me by my uncle,

the general, has been made by myself, and made easily and honestly, by pursuits which were a pleasure to me, and without one insinuation from any slanderer that I was not even liberal in all my pecuniary dealings."

"March 7. — Longman came, with a very pleasant announcement. He and his partners find that they are overflowing with money; and think that they cannot invest it better than by advancing to me, on the usual terms of course, part of what will be due to me in December. We agreed that they shall pay twenty thousand pounds into Williams's bank next week. What a sum to be gained by one edition of a book! I may say, gained in one day. But that was harvest-day. The work had been near seven years in hand. I went to Westbourne Terrace by a Paddington omnibus, and passed an hour there, laughing and laughed at. They are all much pleased. They have, indeed, as much reason to be pleased as I, who am pleased on their account rather than on my own, though I am glad that my last years will be comfortable. Comfortable, however, I could have been on a sixth part of the income which I shall now have."

The cheque is still preserved as a curiosity among the archives of Messrs. Longman's firm.

To this statement Mr. Trevelyan adds the following details, which are an appropriate answer to the predictions of the *Quarterly Review*.

Messrs. Longman's books show that, in an ordinary year, when nothing is done to stimulate the public appetite by novelty of form or reduction of price, their stock of the "History" goes out of their hands at the rate of seventy complete copies a week. But a computation founded on this basis would give a very inadequate notion of the extent to which Macaulay's most important work is bought and read; for no account would have been taken of the years in which large masses of new and cheap editions were sold off in the course of a few months. 12,024 copies of a single volume of the "History" were put into circulation in 1858, and 22,925 copies of a single volume in 1864. During the nine years ending with the 25th of June 1857, Messrs. Longman disposed of 30,478 copies of the first volume of the "History;" 50,783 copies during the nine years ending with June 1866; and 52,392 copies during the nine years ending with June 1875. Within a generation of its first appearance, upwards of a hundred and forty thousand copies of the "History" will have been printed and sold in the United Kingdom alone.

Caring little for money, except in so far as he was able to make a liberal and generous use of it, Macaulay enjoyed the power his new opulence had conferred on him. Until he was fifty-two years of age, he had never had a carriage of his own, except when in office; indeed he had

never even had a house. He now removed from the Albany to an agreeable villa on Campden Hill, with a gallery to the south and a garden—an abode perfectly suited to him: and he continued, with increasing liberality, to assist those who had any claims on him, and a great many of those who had not. The appeals to him from distressed literary men were numberless, but he never turned a deaf ear to them. One morning a gentleman calls on him and relates his embarrassments; he was a Cambridge man and his name was known in philology; Macaulay is moved, and without even ascertaining his identity, gives him a cheque for a hundred pounds. His generosity, when his heart was touched, and his heart was easily touched, was really unbounded.

Macaulay lived exactly four years after the publication of the second portion of his "History," and had his health and energy not been greatly impaired, that time would have sufficed to carry him to the close of the reign of Anne. But the truth is that although he had only then completed his fifty-fifth year he was prematurely old—as old, physically, as most men are at seventy. In intellectual power and in the gift of memory he suffered no decline. It is a subject of eternal regret that he should not so far have husbanded or applied his time and strength as to include the reign of Anne in his "History"—that reign which has been so often attempted, and as yet so inadequately described.

Gradually and unwillingly Macaulay acquiesced in the conviction that he must submit to leave untold that very portion of English history which he was competent to treat as no man again will treat it. Others may study the reign of Anne with a more minute and exclusive diligence,—the discovery of materials hitherto concealed cannot fail from time to time to throw fresh light upon transactions so extensive and complicated as those which took place between the rupture of the peace of Ryswick and the accession of the house of Brunswick; but it may safely be affirmed that few or none of Macaulay's successors will be imbued like him with the enthusiasm of the period. There are phases of literary taste which pass away, never to recur; and the early associations of future men of letters will seldom be connected with "The Rape of the Lock," and the "Essay on Criticism,"—with "The Spectator," "The Guardian," "The Freeholder," the "Memoirs of Martinus Scriblerus," and the "History of John Bull." But Macaulay's youth was nourished upon Pope, and Bolingbroke, and Atterbury, and Defoe. Everything which has been written by them, or about them, was as familiar to him as "The Lady of the Lake," and "The

Bride of Abydos," were to the generation which was growing up when Lockhart's "Life of Scott" and Moore's "Life of Byron" were making their first appearance in the circulating libraries. He had Prior's burlesque verses, and Arbuthnot's pasquinades, as completely at his fingers' ends as a clever public-schoolboy of fifty years ago had the "Rejected Addresses," or the poetry of the Anti-Jacobin. He knew every pamphlet which had been put forth by Swift, or Steele, or Addison as well as Tories of 1790 knew their Burke, or Radicals of 1820 knew their Cobbett. There were times when he amused himself with the hope that he might even yet be permitted to utilize these vast stores of information, on each separate fragment of which he could so easily lay his hand. His diary shows him to have spent more than one summer afternoon "walking in the portico, and reading pamphlets of Queen Anne's time." But he had no real expectation that the knowledge which he thus acquired would ever be turned to account.

In truth he was conscious that, with no acute disease, and with little actual suffering, the sand of life was well-nigh spent in the hour-glass. He turned with deeper affection to those he loved. His tears flowed more readily at any passage of his favourite authors that touched his sensibility, or at any kind and generous action which kindled his admiration. To use Mr. Trevelyan's touching language:—

Of the feelings which he entertained towards the great minds of bygone ages it is not for any one except himself to speak. He has told us how his debt to them was incalculable; how they guided him to truth; how they filled his mind with noble and graceful images; how they stood by him in all vicissitudes,—comforters in sorrow, nurses in sickness, companions in solitude, "the old friends who are never seen with new faces; who are the same in wealth and in poverty, in glory and in obscurity." Great as were the honours and possessions which Macaulay acquired by his pen, all who knew him were well aware that the titles and rewards, which he gained by his own works, were as nothing in the balance as compared with the pleasure which he derived from the works of others. That knowledge has largely contributed to the tenderness with which he has been treated by writers whose views on books, and events, and politics past and present differ widely from his own. It has been well said that even the most hostile of his critics cannot help being "awed and touched by his wonderful devotion to literature." And, while his ardent and sincere passion for letters has thus served as a protection to his memory, it was likewise the source of much which calls for admiration in his character and conduct. The confidence with which he could rely upon intellectual pursuits for occupation and amusement assisted him not a little to preserve that dignified compo-

sure, with which he met all the changes and chances of his public career; and that spirit of cheerful and patient endurance, which sustained him through years of broken health and enforced seclusion.

There are people who conceive themselves to be fond of reading and conversant with literature, because they devour the nerveless publications of the day, and exhaust the circulating libraries. They forget, or they do not know, that the broadest and richest fields of literature lie in more remote regions. Macaulay, with his boundless appetite for books, had but scant indulgence for the writers of his own time. Measured by his standard they appeared to him paradoxical, fantastical, and even contemptible. He rushed past these ephemeral productions, to dwell more constantly and more frequently with the imperishable remains of former ages. That which really charmed him in letters was not their novelty but their antiquity, their vitality, their duration. His biographer admits, apparently with regret, that writers of the stamp of Mr. Buckle, Mr. Carlyle, and Mr. Ruskin had not the power to command his attention. Perhaps if they could have come down to him with the authority of a thousand years, and a dead language, he would have appreciated them more highly.

The gloom of the winter of 1859 was heightened to him by the dread of an approaching separation from his beloved sister and one of his nieces, who were to join Sir Charles Trevelyan at Madras in February: but from the terrible pang of that departure he was mercifully spared. On Christmas-day his family once more gathered round his hearth—but he talked little and continually fell asleep. On the morning of December 28, he dictated a letter to a poor curate, enclosing a cheque for twenty-five pounds. That was the last time he signed his name. That same evening, sitting in his library, with a book before him, still open at the last-read page, he ceased to breathe. "He died as he had always wished to die;—without pain, without any formal farewell; preceding to the grave all whom he loved; and leaving behind him a great and honourable name, and the memory of a life every action of which was as clear and transparent as one of his own sentences." On January 9, 1860, they laid him in Westminster Abbey, at the foot of the statue of Addison, and he was joined to that illustrious company of scholars and statesmen whom it had been the study and the glory of his life to emulate.

What Lord Macaulay was his own writings and these volumes sufficiently attest. We shall not attempt to retrace the outlines of his genius and his character, for we have already recorded in these pages our own sense of his greatness.* His extraordinary powers of intellect and memory were already known to the world. But the world had yet to learn with how fine a poetic temperament and with what warmth of heart these gifts were combined.

In conclusion, it only remains to us to acknowledge the skill and candour with which Mr. Trevelyan has executed a very delicate and difficult task. So much of the life of his illustrious uncle was spent within the sanctuary of domestic life, that it was impossible to make it entirely known to posterity without lifting those veils of privacy which are commonly drawn closer by the ties of kindred and personal affection. But it was his good fortune to have nothing to conceal, and nothing to relate that was not amiable, honourable, and true. Details, sometimes trivial in 'themselves, add to the reality of the picture, and we do not doubt that these volumes will be read throughout the world with a curiosity and an interest, only to be surpassed by the success of Lord Macaulay's own writings.

* See *Edinburgh Review*, vol. cxi., p. 273.

From The Cornhill Magazine.

JUSTIN VITALI'S CLIENT: A FRENCH "CAUSE CELEBRE."

I.

A MAN on whose prospects success seemed to shine most sunnily was Justin Vitali, of the Bar of M—. At the age of thirty he had already achieved a reputation as a learned lawyer and an eloquent pleader. Without influential connections to help him on—labouring under the drawback of being a Corsican, which is not a title of merit in the eyes of French barristers who dislike the politics of their insular brethren, addicted, moreover, to solitary study which kept him from chumming with his fellows or going out into society and making friends of the sort who often do more for a barrister than professional merit does, Justin Vitali had, nevertheless, attracted attention much quicker than if he had had recourse to ambitious acts. He was just the sort of man whom solicitors appreciate. He had the gift of

listening. It has been said that conversation has become a lost art in these our times because every man reflects on what he shall answer instead of paying attention to what he hears; Vitali, on the contrary, hearkened with all his ears, and his memory was so retentive that he often surprised a client by reminding him of a cursory remark which had been uttered without any intention that it should be remembered. It was a maxim of his that the merits of a case are ascertained less by what a client says than by what he lets slip; and he had a tact for drawing on a speaker to be communicative by an appearance of tacitly acquiescing in all his observations. This power of concentrated attention brought to bear on the reading of his briefs lent Vitali the force which an advocate must needs acquire who speaks with a full knowledge of his case, and it made him a dangerous opponent for leading barristers of large practice who went into court having but skimmed their briefs. It got to be said that when eminent counsel knew they were to be pitted against Justin Vitali they took care to master their facts and charged a heavier fee for the trouble. But, though other barristers might by fits and starts emulate the Corsican's industry, few could compete with the inborn gifts which made him an orator. He was a muscular man of middle height, with a swarthy complexion, black hair which he wore long and brushed off his high forehead without any parting, thick black whiskers trimmed short, and dark eyes, large and piercing. In his ordinary attire he might have been taken for a provincial farmer in Sunday dress, for he wore ill-cut baggy clothes of rough cloth, and was not careful about dusting them; but in court his gown and cambric fall became him well, and as soon as he had put them on he was another man. In this atmosphere of justice, which was his real sphere, he thawed; the cold expression of his features gave place to a look of ardent interest in all that was going on; he would turn his eyes with prompt, inquiring flashes on judges, witnesses, and on the jury if it were a criminal case; and casual spectators who did not know his ways, might have thought that he was continually tempted to spring on to his legs before the time. But this excitement was only outward, for when Vitali rose to speak, his impulses were always under his control; they were like a steam-machine which a child's hand can guide. He despised tricks of rhetoric, declamatory gestures, and sensational phrases,

his eloquence being the natural outpouring of a full mind and heart, flowing like a torrent from a subterranean lake. He had a clear and melodious voice; his gestures were few and graceful, and his Corsican imagination tinged his speeches with a warm colouring, with happy metaphors, and with occasional beauties of true poetical pathos, more especially when he was pleading in cases in which his own sensibilities were greatly stirred.

This very frequently happened, for Vitali had laid down for himself a singular rule of conscience: he would plead no causes which he did not sincerely believe to be just. A well-known Scotch professor of jurisprudence being asked to deal with the question as to whether an advocate were justified in pleading iniquitous causes, answered that a counsel is a mouthpiece, not a judge, and that it is merely his function to place his client's case before the bench in the manner in which the client himself would have stated it had he possessed the requisite oratorical ability and legal knowledge. Vitali took a different view of an advocate's duties, and contended that a man has no right to place his talents and his learning at the service of a person who is endeavouring to do a wrong. "As well," said he, "might a locksmith argue that he was justified in aiding a burglar to break into a house so long as he took no share in the proceeds of the robbery." And on another occasion, smiling at somebody who had styled barristers "the defenders of the widow and the orphan," he replied dryly, "Yes, but if some barristers defend the widow and orphan it is presumably because others attack them; therefore the bar contains as many assailants as champions of the widow and orphan." Often when he had read a brief through, Vitali returned it with a note to the effect that he thought the cause untenable. And once or twice he had appended some words of critical advice which proved most unwelcome to the suitors who had wished to retain him. Had he been less laborious or able, or less successful in winning the causes which he did undertake, his hyper-scrupulousness would have blighted his professional prospects. As it was, solicitors gave him a character for eccentricity, and while praising him aloud, thanked heaven in secret that there were not more like him.

But Vitali had also made himself numerous enemies, for it was not to be expected that a man should set up a rigid moral principle without seriously offend-

ing many worthy people who were less rigid. All the suitors whom Vitali had snubbed spoke with wrathful contempt of his pretended integrity, deriding it as the affectation of an hypocritical character; and from *esprit de corps* the Corsican's fellow-barristers concurred. After all they were as good as he. Did he imagine forsooth that *they* pleaded unrighteously, that *they* had no principles, that *they* would let the temptation of a heavy retaining fee sway their sensitive consciences? Although M—— is a large maritime city of nearly half a million inhabitants, its society is thoroughly provincial, and everybody there knows or believes he knows everybody else. It came to be rumoured that Justin Vitali's "bearishness" was due to his having been crossed in love; others discovered that his real name was Vitali della Sebbia, but that he had dropped his aristocratical patronymic because he was the son of a fraudulent bankrupt, who had hanged himself to escape the hulks; others felt sure that Vitali would turn out to have been a secret agent of the Jesuits, and they begged the rest to mark their words. In short, envy being unable to deny the Corsican's talent went to work dropping fly-spots on his reputation or his motives; but this did not prevent Vitali from increasing in credit among suitors day by day, for suitors, like patients, will run to the man who can bring them speediest relief, and there is no relief in law like a good verdict.

II.

At the moment when this tale opens Justin Vitali had just been pleading a cause which was to set the seal to his renown. He had appeared as counsel for an opposition newspaper prosecuted by government. The prosecution was unjust, but as there is no jury in press-trials, the defendants had little justice to expect from three judges who, besides being ever anxious to serve government, seemed to have the letter of the law on their side. Vitali took codes and precedents in hand, and proved that law as well as abstract equity were on the side of his clients; and he forced the bench to acquit on a legal technicality. No such thing had ever been seen in the annals of newspaper-trials in M——; and after the judges had delivered their finding, in a densely-crowded court, which had become the scene of enthusiastic and tumultuous cheering, they grew afraid of their own work. The president of the tribunal, a shrewd old time-serving judge, repaired to a recep-

tion which the prefect was holding that evening; so did the deputy procurator-general, for he was impatient to demonstrate that he had done his very utmost to get the journalists fined and sent to prison.

But they found the prefect much less concerned about the failure of his prosecution than about Vitali's remarkable display of eloquence and legal acumen. He was a Bonapartist, who served the republic grudgingly and hoped perseveringly for a restoration of the third empire, which might make a cabinet minister of him.

"What a speech!" he said musingly to the president; "a dismal pity that such an orator should belong to the Radicals."

"But M. Vitali is a Bonapartist, I believe," replied the president, glad to show that he and his assessors had not been worsted by a republican.

"A Bonapartist—and yet he pleads for the 'Reds'?"

"That is the failing of the man. He pleads for anybody—whom he thinks in the right."

"If he be a Bonapartist, he is a man to be taken up," exclaimed the prefect, eagerly, for he knew the president was also an Imperialist. "We might push him forward at the next election. He would be a wonderful recruit for our party, now that Rouher is aging."

"H'm! he would give you a good deal of trouble. Independence is his hobby."

"Oh! as to that, I have known many an Aristides grow tractable when a good berth was offered him," was the prefect's confident answer. "The procurator-generalship of M—— is still vacant, and I'll see if I can't get Vitali appointed to it."

"He wouldn't accept," said the president, with assurance. "So long as you pay a procurator-general but fifteen thousand francs a year, the post isn't worth the consideration of a man of thirty in large practice."

"You leave the honour out of account," rejoined the prefect. "Besides, the post would only be a stepping-stone to politics. At all events we can try."

The deputy procurator, who was approaching, and overheard the prefect's remarks, pulled a wry face. He had set influences at work to obtain the procuratorship for himself, and he lost no time in leaving the party to go and telegraph to his friends in Paris to bestir themselves.

Meanwhile Justin Vitali, exhausted by his long and intricate speech in court, had returned to his chambers. They were poorly furnished rooms, whose chief lux-

ury was the library of well-bound law-books, which every French advocate is bound to possess before he can be admitted to the bar. Prior to sitting down to the frugal dinner which was sent him every day from a cookshop, Vitali went up to his writing-table, which groaned under a weight of papers, and began this letter:—

"MY DEARLY-LOVED MOTHER,

"To-morrow's newspapers will carry you the report of a trial which has been my greatest success, and which will, I trust, definitely consolidate my position. My earnings are steadily on the increase, and I have little doubt now that after five years more of patient work, favoured by the luck which has hitherto befriended me, I shall be able to pay off my poor father's debts and clear his memory of the stain which was so maliciously and wrongfully thrown upon it. Towards this end, on which we have both set our hearts, you may rely that I shall not cease to strive, to the exclusion of every other hope or ambition —"

He had got so far when there was a ring at the door of his chambers, and his servant entered with a card, saying that a lady desired to see M. Vitali at once.

"A lady at this hour? Did you ask her business?" said Vitali, as he glanced at the card, on which was the name "*Madame Desplans*."

"She is a young person, sir, and she says she will not detain you above an hour," said the servant.

"An hour; that is at least frank: they generally say 'not above five minutes,' remarked Vitali with a weary smile. "Inquire whether the business is so urgent that the lady cannot fix an appointment."

"She seemed very anxious to see you, sir," rejoined the man, and he opened the door to go out; but at this moment a lady dressed in deep mourning suddenly glided past him, and entered the room.

The shade over the table-lamp kept the light down and rendered it difficult to discern the visitor's features. But it was evident that she was young, slight of stature, and judging by the quality of her apparel and her gracefully dignified carriage, a person accustomed to good society. She walked straight up to Vitali's table without speaking. He rose astonished, but bowing, and offered her a seat, and it was only when the servant had retired that she addressed him in a musical voice of great vivacity and rendered slightly tremulous by excitement.

"Excuse me for intruding upon you, M. Vitali, but I wish you to appear for me in a lawsuit. I received notice this morning of an unworthy action that is to be brought against me, and nobody was ever so shamefully abused as I am in that paper. Here it is in my pocket, and I will leave it with you. When I got it at ten o'clock I cried for an hour; but my maid told me I had better come to you who are so famous, so I went to the courts, but you were speaking in that newspaper-case, and when it was over I could not get near you because of the throng of persons who were applauding you. I applauded like the rest, for I assure you you were very eloquent, and it occurred to me that if you could find so many things to say for a journalist, you would speak still better in defence of a lonely persecuted woman."

"The suit is about a will," interrupted Vitali politely, for he was proof against compliments. "Allow me to glance at the paper. H'm! mercenary acts, wiles. It appears the plaintiffs wish to have the testator's will annulled on the ground of —"

"Yes, on the ground that I used undue influence!" exclaimed Madame Desplans. "Did you ever hear of such a thing? Why the money in question was bequeathed me by a man who at least twenty times offered to marry me and who might have been alive now if I had given him my hand! But I won't waste your time in exclamations; here are the bare facts. I was left an orphan at twelve, and at eighteen was married to a retired naval officer, who had been a great friend of my father. Captain Desplans, though much older than I, was a most affectionate husband, and we lived happily together for four years — until the captain, having embarked all his fortune in a speculation, was ruined. The blow preyed greatly on his mind because of me. During a few months he tried hard to find employment, but his age for active work was past, so that he fell ill of despair and very soon died, leaving me unprovided for."

"You were absolutely destitute?" asked Vitali, who continued to glance at the notice of process.

"I had just ten thousand francs and my jewels."

"And no relatives or friends to give you a home?"

"No relative at all," said Madame Desplans, shaking her head; "but I had one friend, Captain Lacroix, who had formerly been lieutenant on board my husband's ship, and who is the person men-

tioned in that document. It is he who left me the property in dispute, and whose mourning I am wearing. And oh, when I think that those selfish relatives of his, who never once came near him in his illness, and who had done all they could to make his life wretched — when I think that they dare to accuse me of having been mercenary, false, depraved, and everything that's wicked, it's too much to bear: oh, oh!" and the young widow burst into tears.

"Console yourself, madam," said Vitali gently: "these law papers are often drawn up in brutal terms; but if the charges brought against you be false, there will be so much the more dishonour for your accusers."

"False, why of course they are false; can you doubt it?" ejaculated Madame Desplans, looking up as if the merest hesitation were an outrage on her. "Why I devoted myself to Captain Lacroix, and spent six months nursing him when, as I have told you, I might have become his wife if I had pleased, and have inherited the whole of his property instead of the half which he left me. He was about forty years old when I first became acquainted with him, that is some six years younger than my husband. He frequently visited at our house, and I was not long in perceiving that he cherished a deep attachment towards me. He ended by declaring himself, and I ordered him not to let me see his face again, threatening if he returned to our house I would inform my husband of his conduct. He did go away and remained absent for two years; but so soon as my husband was dead he hastened back from Italy, where he was, and made me an offer of his hand. I felt no doubt that he sincerely loved me, but I was angry with him for his past behaviour; besides which he was a man of passionate and morose temper, with whom I knew it would have been impossible for me to live happy."

"This paper says that he was almost imbecile from confirmed intemperance."

"He became that after I had rejected him," said Madame Desplans, drying her eyes. "I believe he had given way to drink during his two years' absence, but upon my telling him that I would never be his wife he appears to have abandoned himself altogether; so that one day I received a raving letter from him in which he said that he was on his deathbed, that it was my cruelty that was killing him, but that I could restore him to life if I would go and see him and give him a word of hope. I confess that I was seized with

terror, and with some remorse, for it is horrible to be told one is causing the death of a man whose only crime is to have loved you too well. Consulting only my first impulse, I hastened to Captain Lacroix's house, thinking that I would only stay there a few days to nurse him until he got well. But he lingered on for months alternately lucid and delirious, but always quite incapable of taking care of himself, and in such a complete physical prostration that I awoke every morning with the conviction that he would be dead before night. When he did die at last it was found that by a will dated during the time while my husband was alive, he had left me half his fortune, that is a million francs, for he was a rich man, the son of a Marseilles merchant. Then it was that his relatives, who had left me to nurse him on his deathbed, fell upon me with that paper in which they charge me with having circumvented the unhappy man, with having tried to cozen him into marrying me; indeed they almost hint that when I found he would not yield to me, I ended by poisoning him, so as to become possessed of what he had left me the sooner. Ah, it is all too infamous, M. Vitali! Do I look like a scheming adventuress — do I look like a poisoner?"

She had half risen in uttering these words. Vitali lifted the lamp-shade and the light fell full on her features. No, it was not the face of an adventuress nor of anything but what was sweet and good. She had large blue eyes, soft and candid as a child's, a tiny mouth which no falsehood could ever have defiled, and pale golden hair that seemed to crown her pure brow with an aureola of innocence like those on angels' heads. So at least thought Justin Vitali as his admiring gaze fell on the young face turned supplicatingly towards his. From that moment his destiny altered its course.

She had no need to continue clasping her hands as she did, for her cause was now right in his eyes, although all mankind should arise to accuse her. There was a look of protection in the glance he bent on her; then something like timidity stole into it, and a sensation which he could not account for, but which made his heart beat, took sudden possession of him. He turned towards his desk, caught up a pen, and to give himself a countenance, asked his visitor some desultory questions, her full names and address (her Christian name was Clotilde), whether she had a solicitor, what documents she could furnish to assist her defence, etc. All this

time he felt nervous, and dared not look again at Madame Desplans. He stammered, and the consciousness that he was doing so made him redder: then he became aware that he was prolonging his questions with an inward purpose of preventing his visitor from going away — and this discovery filling him with confusion lest he should be detected, he said abruptly, by manner of closing the interview: —

"Your solicitor will have to instruct me in due form, madame, but your case is happily not a difficult one. By the way, am I to understand that you are entirely dependent for support on Captain Lacroix's legacy?"

"Yes," answered the young widow artlessly; "I brought my husband no dower, but though destitute I probably should not have accepted the captain's money if his relatives had behaved with common kindness to me. I knew nothing about his will till it was opened after his death, and I was more surprised than anybody to find that a million had been bequeathed to me. But now that I have been so basely slandered I would maintain my rights at any cost, even if I were bound to throw the million into the sea as soon as I got it."

"That is natural," answered Vitali, who was too much of a Corsican not to sympathize with the craving for revenge. "The legacy is but a just acknowledgment of your devotedness in tending the dying man — besides, I suppose the captain was aware that your husband had been ruined."

"He was not only aware of it, but he was himself partially the author of our ruin, and that is just the point, for in his will he treats the legacy as a retribution," exclaimed Madame Desplans animatedly. "I should tell you that Captain Lacroix often advised my husband on pecuniary matters, and once he counselled him to invest in a mining-company which had been started in Corsica."

"In Corsica!" exclaimed Vitali with a start, while a deep pallor of a sudden overspread his face.

"Yes; and the company soon went to ruin, for it had been founded by a dishonest banker — one Della Sebbia. But what is the matter, M. Vitali? — you look unwell."

"Della Sebbia was not dishonest, I solemnly vow," said Vitali, standing up and speaking with considerable emotion. "In founding the mining-company, madame, he sincerely believed that he was promoting a genuine enterprise, and when the

ruin overtook him and his shareholders he committed suicide."

"Oh dear!" exclaimed Madame Desplans, opening wide her blue eyes and assuming an air of contrition, "but I hope I have said nothing — was that M. della Sebbia —"

"He was my father," said Justin Vitali, whose brow contracted as with pain.

There was a moment's silence. The young widow had risen, and the Corsican and his client stood for a brief space close together with downcast faces, neither speaking. Madame Desplans broke the silence by saying, in a tone of compassion and regret:

"I am truly sorry, M. Vitali — I could not guess — but this will not prevent you from defending me, will it?"

"That is a question for yourself to decide," answered Vitali, a little bitterly. "But if you cannot believe in the honesty of the father, I would advise you not to submit your fortune and reputation to the care of the son."

"I will believe anything you tell me, M. Vitali," said Madame Desplans, without hesitation; then she added, with a half-smile, "but, unintentionally as it may be, your father was the cause of our ruin. He was the cause that I am standing before you to-day; so you owe me a kind of reparation. Prevent me from being despoiled of Captain Lacroix's legacy, and we shall be quits."

III.

WHAT momentous events may not happen between two paragraphs of a letter interrupted for an hour! When Vitali wrote to his mother that he would devote himself to clearing his father's memory "to the exclusion of all other objects or ambitions," he said what he meant: when he resumed his letter, this passage in it was no longer true. His filial piety had not lessened, but a new clement of hopes and fears had entered his life. His main object at present was to clear Clotilde Desplans; and when he had done that, what then? Here he asked himself with uneasiness why he should shrink from looking to the time when the professional relations between himself and the young widow should be at an end, and when perhaps she would go away and be never more seen of him? His life would become a cheerless blank again then, as it had been before she had come to him like a sunbeam into a prison cell. He had looked upon her, and it seemed to him that her face

must forevermore remain shining before his mind's eyes.

When she had gone, he carefully read through the writ of process with which she had been served, and which, like all such documents in France, was a most elaborate indictment, covering several pages of stamped paper. The terms of it made his blood boil. Accustomed as he was to the calumnious malice of litigants, to the diabolical ingenuity with which a plaintiff's lawyer can pervert the meaning of the simplest acts and words so that they may be made to bear a felonious significance, Justin Vitali nevertheless thought that slander had never been pushed to greater length, and humanity, honour, decency, and common sense never been more outrageously set at defiance, than in this document, which accused Clotilde Desplans of being a false intriguer and swindler. He foresaw that the case would make an immense noise, for, in a country where women's influence is paramount, the public have a great interest in knowing what constitutes an exercise of *undue* influence; then the magnitude of the sum at stake would lend importance to the suit, besides greatly heating the plaintiffs' pleas, for Frenchmen do fight with exceeding desperation for a million francs.

All the other briefs which Vitali had in hand at this time lapsed into the background of his preoccupations; and on the morrow of Madame Desplans' visit, it cost him real physical suffering to go into court and give his attention during three hours to a knotty insurance-case. He had scarcely slept through the night from thinking of the extraordinary concourse of circumstances which had made him morally the debtor of Madame Desplans, whom his father had unwittingly ruined. He deemed it nobly generous of her to have said that if he won her suit she would consider they were quits; and most magnanimous of her to have shown such readiness in believing in his father's innocence—a point upon which all the world, ay, his most intimate friends (with whom he had quarrelled on that account) remained sceptics. How could he for a moment mistrust the guiltlessness of one who displayed such confidence in him and his? how could he help longing for the day when he should tear her name spotless as a jewel from the ignoble hands who sought to soil it, or help fretting at the inevitable delays which obliged her to remain under the cloud of foul aspersions for weeks at least, perhaps for months?

In the luncheon interval of the in-

surance-case, Vitali stayed in court and wrote Madame Desplans a letter, putting her some questions which he had omitted to ask on the previous day, and sending some general remarks upon the conduct of her case, with the intention of reassuring her. He did not notice that this letter far exceeded in length and in style the usual manner of a business communication, but in all he said he wished to pave the way to an offer to place his purse at her disposal until the trial was ended. It had occurred to him in the night that Madame Desplans' circumstances must be woefully straitened, and that she possibly had not enough to live on in comfort for the next few weeks, setting aside the defrayal of expenses attendant upon the preliminaries of every lawsuit. He was wording his proposal with infinite delicacy, and bidding Madame Desplans regard any loan she would accept as a simple advance on the fortune which she would shortly recover, when one of the most eminent *avoués* in Rouen crossed the court and touched his shoulder. It was M. Boidoux, to whom he had been indebted for many a brief.

"Vitali," said M. Boidoux, "I sent you a big brief yesterday, but don't go to work on it yet, for it will have to be amended, as the case is going to be transferred from a civil suit into a criminal action."

"Very well," replied Vitali, nodding absently. "I haven't yet looked at yesterday's briefs. Who are the parties to this one?"

"Heulard, Viel, and some others, *versus* Desplans, a young widow, and we are for the plaintiffs."

"What?" exclaimed the Corsican, starting as if he had been hit.

"You seem to have heard of the case," observed M. Boidoux, taking a pinch of snuff. "We thought at first we had to do merely with undue influence, but circumstances have come to light which show there was downright murder. Madame Desplans poisoned—"

"Who told you that?" ejaculated Vitali, with so energetic an expression of indignant fury that M. Boidoux recoiled.

"Heigh! What dog has bitten you? You surely don't take an interest in the defendant?" he asked incredulously.

"I am retained for Madame Desplans, and I mean to go on with her case to the end," answered Vitali hotly.

"Oh no, that I am sure you won't!" replied M. Boidoux, wagging his grey head. "You'll drop her brief like a red coal, for I know you. I don't say but that it would

have been a pretty case for you to fight, if there had been no proofs of murder, for after all what is undue influence in a pretty woman? Madame Boidoux used no undue influence on me before our marriage, but if she had asked me to convert all my fortune into golden marbles that she might play at ring-taw —"

"Come to the point, M. Boidoux, I beg," cried Vitali shaking the lawyer's arm almost brutally. "What do you mean by proofs of murder?"

"Laudanum in the body," replied M. Boidoux positively. "At least we hope to find some there," he added, correcting himself. "Examining the deceased's papers the day before yesterday, we came upon letters in which he expressed fears that Madame Desplans was endeavouring to poison him. These letters had been written by him in bed; they had been put into envelopes, sealed, addressed, and stamped for posting, and it was evident that Madame Desplans had suppressed them. This set us instituting inquiries, and we ascertained that Madame Desplans had on a certain day purchased laudanum. Of course we applied forthwith to the procurator for an order to have Captain Lacroix's body exhumed, and that is being done at this moment. As for Clotilde Desplans, she is in prison; we had her arrested last night."

Muttering a growl, and launching a fulminating glance at the lawyer, Vitali fled from the court at the moment when all the parties to the insurance-suit were returning to it.

He rushed across the pleaders' hall, flew down a staircase, and with his gown streaming behind him, made for a courtyard leading to the prison-house. But on reaching the open air, he sank discouraged on a stone bench. He recollected that it would be impossible for him to see Clotilde. In France a prisoner apprehended on a criminal charge is kept in solitary confinement (*au secret*) till the examination by the *juge d'instruction* is at end; and sometimes this examination lasts for months! Vitali thought with a shudder of the agonies which the young widow was going to endure, debarred from all communications with the outer world, precluded from seeing any faces save those of her gaolers and of the examining magistrate, who day after day would torture her with insidious cross-questions intending to wring from her an avowal of guilt. Some strong men have been known to go mad under this protracted torment:

how was a weak, impressionable woman likely to bear up against it?

Vitali went back with aching head and heart to the court, and pleaded for his client in the insurance-case. It required a miracle of self-command to enable him to bring his mind to what he was doing, but the very force of his sorrow lent him an artificial strength, and though he spoke with a haggard face and an irritable manner, he won his suit. As he was leaving the court, Boidoux accosted him, looking triumphant.

"I told you how it would be. The *post-mortem* is over, and they have found laudanum in the body."

"I don't believe it," snarled Vitali.

"But come, man — when I tell you so! The doctors say he took a dose fit to kill a family."

"Reason the more. He committed suicide."

"Ah, if you're going to plead that, it's another affair," said the lawyer tranquilly. "But I warn you it will be uphill work; we have a chain of evidence that is flawless."

"Look here, M. Boidoux, have you ever yet known me plead for a criminal?" asked Vitali, halting and glaring at the old solicitor as if he would eat him.

"No, my dear fellow, but you're not infallible," said M. Boidoux, buttoning up his top-coat. "At any rate the affair is going to make a pretty fuss. See, it's already in the papers," and he handed the Corsican an evening journal, in a conspicuous part of which was printed in large letters: "MYSTERIOUS POISONING-CASE. ARREST OF THE MURDERESS."

IV.

THE "Desplans Poisoning-Case," as it was called, was destined to convulse not only the city of M—, but the whole of France. There happened to be no topic of engrossing interest before the public at that moment, and this tale of alleged crime came as a welcome prey for the popular tongues to feed on. The youth and beauty of the suspected murderess, her distinguished social status, the large sum which was supposed to have prompted the murder, all these features combined to invest the affair with a special attractiveness, so that in every place of public meeting throughout the country Madame Desplans and her doings supplanted discussions about politics, new comedies, and new fashions. As the doctrine of contempt of court is unknown in France

— at least in the English latter-day application of the same — the newspapers freely commented on the evidence that had come to light. All that could be raked up as to Madame Desplans' antecedents was broadly published; her portrait appeared in the illustrated papers (and a sweet portrait it was), and, under the form of *complaintes*, long-winded ballads descriptive of the crime were whined in the streets by itinerant singers. At first, public opinion was, as almost always happens, dead against the prisoner, but the publication of the portrait caused a reaction; and when it became known that Madame Desplans was to be defended by Justin Vitali, "whose voice had never been lifted up in an unjust cause," the country divided itself into two equal camps, the one largely composed of husbands, married ladies, and old ladies, who trusted that the prisoner would be guillotined; the other made up of all gallant and romantic souls, who enthusiastically, nay, frantically, proclaimed her innocence.

The theory of the prosecution, as regards the prisoner, was briefly summed up thus:—

Clotilde Desplans was a person of extravagant tastes. Cold-hearted, wilful, fond of finery and generally frivolous, she had married Captain Desplans without concern for his old age, and solely because he was rich. Once married, her conduct had been flagrantly irregular. Captain Desplans had been obliged to forbid Captain Lacroix his house because the latter had made love to Clotilde; and soon Clotilde's reckless expenditure plunged her husband into pecuniary embarrassments, which he sought to override by injudicious speculations, and so ruined himself. From this moment, averred the prosecution, Madame Desplans had formed the project of marrying Captain Lacroix; and if no proof existed of her having poisoned her husband to compass this end, there existed a strong presumption that she had done so, and it was certain that Captain Lacroix had suspected her of this crime. This accounted for his having refused to marry her, though his love for her had been very great; and also for his having addicted himself to drink in the 'grief which the knowledge of her infamous deed had caused him. It was not denied that during the closing months of his life Captain Lacroix's intellect had been deranged, and many of the letters he had written on his deathbed bore evident traces of insanity; but the prosecution argued that though facts might be exag-

gerated in these letters, there was a substratum of truth in them, and that they must be taken in connection with the finding of poison in the deceased's body. Madame Desplans had hurried to Captain Lacroix's house immediately on his being bedridden, and from that moment she had allowed no one to approach him. She had discharged two out of his three servants, and these persons deposed to her having taken possession of the captain's house as if she were mistress of it, to her having been imperious and quick-tempered, and to her having required them to give up the keys of the captain's plate-cupboard, cellars, etc., which she constantly kept about her, with the keys of his desk, bureau, and of a safe that contained his valuables. The third servant, an old woman, who had remained with the captain till his death, stated that Madame Desplans had nursed the captain with great apparent kindness, but she confessed that when the two were alone together she had often overheard the sick man's voice abusing Madame Desplans as a would-be murderess. Moreover, that Madame Desplans had ordered her — the servant — on no account to post any letters the captain might write. A chemist deposed to Madame Desplans' having bought laudanum at his shop; and the doctor who attended the sick man gave evidence that he died rather suddenly at a moment when a turn for the better had seemed to supervene in his condition. From this it was inferred that Madame Desplans had poisoned the captain from fear that he would recover, and that when once restored to health he would cancel the testamentary dispositions he had made in her favour at the time whilst her husband was still alive, and whilst he — Lacroix — still deemed her worthy of his love. As a criminal indictment is never complete in France unless the remotest and least-important circumstances in a prisoner's life are laid bare, the examining witness had summoned a former governess of Clotilde's to prove that the prisoner had as a child been headstrong and often unmanageable. A discharged maid swore to her having frequently quarrelled with her husband; a discharged valet of Captain Desplans' had heard her remark at a dinner-party that death by laudanum must be a pleasant death, which clearly pointed to a long pre-occupation on the means of taking life, and to a suspicious conversantship with the properties of poisons.

What Justin Vitali suffered whilst all these depositions and conjectures, some

terrible, some absurd, came to him piecemeal through newspaper reports, it is impossible to describe. Weeks passed without his being admitted to see Madame Desplans. Her case was in the hands of M. Ragot, a small wizen *juge d'instruction*, who would turn a prisoner over and over as a dog does a bone, and would not let him go so long as a scrap of secret remained to be torn off. This grim man being questioned one day by Vitali as to Madame Desplans' health, answered blandly that the prisoner was as well as could be expected, and that he had given orders that she should want for nothing in the way of comforts compatible with her position. Vitali, who had never spoken to Ragot before, felt that he was committing an imprudence in questioning him; but he could bear the suspense no longer, and he had indulged a furtive hope that he might be able to insinuate a word or two that would propitiate the judge in Clotilde's favour. But his first hints in this direction fell against M. Ragot like paper pellets against a stone wall. M. Ragot was duty incarnate. M. Ragot, though not above five feet high, was a colossus in the science of worming facts out of a prisoner and keeping his counsel about the same till the time came for their official publication. The French code which invests a *juge d'instruction* with the most tremendous of powers — that of examining prisoners in secret, and committing or releasing them on his own sole uncontrolled responsibility, has reared a class of men astute as lynxes, silent as confessors. M. Ragot would not have whispered a secret to the coals on his fire for fear it should be spread by the smoke up the chimney. He confined himself to telling Vitali that his case was progressing "hopefully," — but "hopefully" in a *juge d'instruction's* mouth means that proofs of a crime are thickening, or that the prisoner is being successfully harried into self-accusation.

Vitali was fain to be patient. With no materials to work with other than those which had been supplied him by Madame Desplans in one short hour's interview, he had to construct a defensive theory of his own, but to do this cost him little trouble, for he considered his whole case to be clear as the noonday. Captain Lacroix was a madman labouring under that form of hallucination which doctors call the "delirium of persecution:" his fears of being poisoned were all a result of his mania and nothing else. The two servants who testified to Clotilde's imperiousness were disreputable persons who had

been discharged for misconduct, and who were now revenging themselves. The purchase of laudanum had probably been made at the sick man's own request, and to procure him sleep at nights — anyhow, the fact that Clotilde had openly bought it, giving her real name and address to the chemist, was irreconcilable with any theory of murder. The same might be said with regard to the suppression of the sick man's letters, and with respect to Clotilde's whole conduct throughout. Nothing was more natural than that she should prevent the wretched maniac's letters from being posted to spread alarm among his friends and make his insanity notorious; but if there had been intent to murder she would not have allowed those letters to survive as evidences of her victim's suspicions. To this Madame Desplans' detractors answered that assassins have in all times been proverbial for their lack of foresight, which explains why they are so often found out; but Justin Vitali's reply was that with this system of putting far-fetched constructions upon everything, there is not a person, however innocent, but would have guilt affixed on him.

Talk of pleading unjust causes! — where was Vitali's talk of abstract justice in the present case? If proof had been forthcoming that Clotilde Desplans had been seen to pour the poison into the patient's mouth, he would still have brought forward rebutting arguments. He had become morally deaf and blind to all pleas that did not tally with his deliberate convictions. He did not regard the theories of the prosecution as things to be reasoned with, but demolished.

So time wore on, and Vitali's chivalrous obstinacy and devotion to the cause of the suspected murderess came to be as much matters of public rumour as the details of the "murder" itself. Vitali's equals and rivals at the bar of M — laughed to see him "gone so mad," and rejoiced to think that after such an unbroken series of forensic successes he was at last going to run amuck and probably cover himself with ridicule. But the younger barristers who could not yet compete with the eminent Corsican advocate, and who were disposed to take him for their model, thought him sublime, and loudly declared their admiration. It was through them and the younger journalists at M — that Vitali's fame was being trumpeted to all the corners of France. Formerly his celebrity had been purely local, but now there was not a city but was made aware of the renown he had earned by his pecul-

lar conscientiousness; and however the trial might result, it seemed inevitable that the orator of M—— would be obliged in deference to his national popularity to forsake the provincial bar for that of Paris, where a wider field of honours would be open to him. Already Parisian solicitors were writing to him to promise him their patronage in return for his. It was at this juncture that Vitali received a sudden offer of the procurator-generalship at M——. His secret admirer, the Bonapartist prefect, had not forgotten him, and had exercised his influence so diligently that the minister of justice had allowed him to sound the Corsican as to his willingness to become a government servant. Before the Desplans case Vitali would have refused the offer on pecuniary grounds, for his duty towards his father's creditors compelled him to prefer money to honours; but it flashed upon him that if he became procurator the conduct of the prosecution against Madame Desplans would devolve upon him *ex officio*. Now public prosecutors enjoy a good deal of latitude. They receive the commitment writs of the *juges d'instruction*, and it lies within their discretion to suspend proceedings on the ground that the evidence taken before the examining magistrate was insufficient. Or if the case be brought to trial, they can abandon the prosecution in court, declaring that the evidence they have heard has convinced them of the prisoner's innocence. It is not often that procurators do this, and Vitali knew that the deputy procurator of M——, who would have charge of the case if he had not, was one of those men who feel professionally bounden to assert a prisoner's guilt to the very end. It sickened him to think that this narrow-headed functionary would slaver the venom of his salaried animus on Clotilde's purity. He reflected that Clotilde would leave the court with a prouder head if her acquittal, instead of being wrung from the jury by a counsel's speech, were brought about by the public prosecutor abandoning the charge in the name of society; and as for getting another advocate to take his place as the prisoner's counsel, this matter gave him no uneasiness, for he modestly thought that any barrister of heart could defend Clotilde as well as he could. These considerations induced him to call on the prefect and accept the proffered post.

"Ah, well done!" said the ruler of the department, motioning him amicably to a seat. "We were in some dread that you

would refuse; but remember that this appointment is only the first rung of the ladder which you can climb if you are willing. The elections are coming on, and I may tell you confidentially that if you like to stand in the Bonapartist interest — you *are* an Imperialist, I believe?"

"Yes," said Vitali, "and if I can be of any service to the cause I shall be happy to requite the honour you have done me. But I will frankly tell you why I accept this post," and he proceeded to enounce his reasons — with an emotion in breathing Madame Desplans' name which would have struck any observer.

"Oh, oh!" said the prefect, becoming grave, but speaking with a smile. "We all know of your partisanship in this celebrated cause, M. Vitali, but let me give you a friend's advice and urge you to keep aloof from Madame Desplans' affairs on undertaking your new duties. Touching as it is to see you champion the suspected pr — lady — so warmly in a private capacity, it might greatly damage your public career if you began by occasioning a miscarriage of justice."

"But it would not be a miscarriage of justice!" exclaimed Vitali with animation. "Do you think I would defend Madame Desplans if I deemed her guilty? It is because I would answer for her innocence with my head on the block that I long to set her free and restore her fair fame as a public official speaking for my country."

"That is all very good," responded the prefect, "but the world would not believe in so much impartiality."

"But they must be brought to believe it."

"My dear M. Vitali, when we cannot go against the stream one had better swim with it."

"What! when that stream is bearing an innocent creature to infamy and death?"

"Come, come, you must really allow me to guide you," said the prefect with the good-humoured authority of an experienced statesman. "Recollect you are my *protégé*; I look to your running a very brilliant race, and we must not let you mar it at the start. So if you positively cannot refrain from being romantic and generous, I will have your appointment deferred till the trial is over."

"Ah, it would be no use to me then!" cried Vitali in despair. "It was for *her* I was going to accept, not for me."

He returned home in very low spirits. The prefect's manifest conviction of Clotilde's guilt depressed him more than anything he had yet heard from other per-

sons; and for the first time he began to contemplate the possibility of not being able to carry a verdict against public prejudice. Hitherto he had been buoyed up by the confidence that on going into court he would straightway break down the flimsy structure of the prosecution like a house of cards; but what if his eloquence failed?—what if the jury were stubborn and closed their eyes to the light of truth that he would thrust before their faces? It chanced that for the past few days there had been a lull in the newspaper comments on the Desplans case. Everything that could be said about the preliminaries of the affair had been said and mis-said, and the public were now taking a rest from conjecture in expectation of the impending final act of the drama. Gloomy presentiments and visions began to pass through Vitali's brain. He saw a densely packed court full of cruel faces, a bench of obstinate judges, a ruthless sentence pronounced amid a silence broken only by the sobs of an innocent prisoner; then a public square with a machine rearing aloft two huge red posts and a knife, a fainting form dragged up the scaffold steps; and the roar of a surging multitude. It was evening and he shivered. The noise of carts passing in the street under his windows suggested tumbrils, and the occasional voices of workmen and boys, singing, that heartless indifference of crowds who go their ways not caring for blood that has been shed, even though it cry to them from the stones.

A knock at his door roused Vitali from his reverie, and his servant came in with a letter. It bore the stamp of the palace of justice. Vitali's fingers trembled as he tore it open, and he scanned its contents, then staggered, raising his hand to his brow and uttering an awful moan as he read this:

"MY DEAR SIR,

"The preliminary examination of Clotilde Desplans is at an end, and you will be free to visit her to confer about her defence every day dating from to-morrow. I feel some satisfaction in informing you that the prisoner has at length made a confession of her guilt.

"Pray accept the assurances of my regard,

THOMAS RAGOT,
"*Juge d'Instruction.*"

V.

FRENCH procedure, as it has been said, isolates a prisoner—cuts him off from all human succour, and leaves him alone with

the official inquisitor as a fly with the spider. The *juge d'instruction* weaves a web of evidence round his victim, patiently, laboriously. There is no reason why he should hurry, for the longer time he takes so much the less chance will there be of the prisoner's escape, and it is the judge's business to convict rather than to judge. When at last the web has been made so strong that not a thread is wanting; when the net seems to encompass the captive on all sides with its serried, symmetrical meshes, then the spider magistrate opens the door to the counsel for the defence—and the fly—and says complacently, "Now break through my handiwork if you can!"

When he recovered from his first shock of horror, Vitali decided that Clotilde's confession could only have been wrung from her by moral torture. The tormentor's craft was not abolished when the rack and thumbscrews were done away with, and now, as in old times, innocent persons have been known to plead guilty so as to escape from the sufferings of an endless inquisition. Vitali made no doubt that this was the case with Clotilde. His truly was the faith that removes mountains.

So early on the morrow as he could expect to gain admittance he repaired to the prison. It was ten o'clock, and the morning was bright and balmy, one of the sort that inspires hope. The dismal portals of the gaol opened to receive the advocate; some soldiers lounging in the entrance yard stood aside respectfully and whispered his name to each other, and a turnkey conducted him down a flagged passage into a small whitewashed room furnished with a deal table, two rush-bottomed chairs, and a stove. This was the counsel's parlour. It looked pitifully bare, and the iron gate which closed it in lieu of a door (so as to admit of a gendarme's surveillance from without) brought back the minds of visitors implacably to the nature of the building in which they stood. But Justin Vitali forgot that it was a prison. At last, after weeks of anguish that had seemed like years, he was going to see again the woman whose image one brief interview had impressed so ineffaceably on his mind; and at the thought his heart beat like a schoolboy's. Five minutes passed. There were some light steps down the passage; a sister of mercy in black robe and large white-winged cap appeared at the gate, opened it noiselessly with a key at her girdle, and stood back a step while the prisoner entered, then drew back

gate back again with a clanging snap and vanished. Vitali and Clotilde Desplans stood together alone.

The prisoner was dressed in a black merino with white collar and cuffs. She was wasted to thinness; her complexion was as wax, and her eyes, preternaturally enlarged, glistened with the fire of inward fever. She was but the shadow of the lovely, smartly-dressed little woman who ten weeks previously had introduced herself so abruptly to Vitali; so that as the Corsican gazed at her his heart was moved to its depths, and a violent quivering of his lips spoke to the intensity of the emotion he felt. As for her, she scarcely seemed to recognize her defender. She had seen him but once, and apparently he had not been present in her thoughts night and day ever since, as she had been in his. She looked at him sadly a moment, as if to ask on what errand he had come, then bowed to him with a slight smile and sank into a chair:

"Oh, it's you, M. Vitali," she sighed. "The sister did not tell me. I hope you have come to say that all this misery is going to end soon."

"Very soon, I trust," replied Vitali, trying to command his voice, as he took the other chair. "I have come to confer with you about your defence."

"What is the use of defending me?" she asked, in a tone of utter weariness. "They will have it that I am guilty of murder, so I have ended by agreeing with them, in order that they may let me have peace."

"But everybody knows that a confession extorted by such means as have been brought to bear on you is worth nothing."

"Oh, isn't it? I am sorry for that," wailed Clotilde, putting up her hands before her eyes as if to shut out a hideous vision. "Anything is better than what I have gone through. To be insulted, threatened, and cross-questioned day after day — to have all the acts of my life twisted into crimes — to be brought to look upon the disinterred bodies of my husband and Captain Lacroix, and to be told that witness upon witness are swearing to my guilt — oh!"

"The inhuman fiends!" murmured Vitali, rising and pacing about the room.

"It wasn't kind of them," continued Clotilde plaintively, "for they saw that I was weak and could not answer their ingenious charges. Whenever I opened my lips they told me I was telling untruths. They believed discharged serv-

ants sooner than me. It seems I never did a good thing in my life, but have been wicked ever since I was born. Let them put me to death if they please, and the sooner the better, for they don't suppose I can ever forget these weeks of agony, and what they have left me of life is not worth keeping with such recollections."

"You shall not only live, but your innocence shall be proved spotless as snow!" exclaimed Vitali, whose voice was unsteady, and whose whole frame shook. "I will come to see you every day, Madame Desplans,— I am your friend — and will get you acquitted."

"Thank you for saying so — but why should you be my friend?" sighed Clotilde incredulously; "you don't know me. You must have the same opinion of me as the rest."

"Before God, I believe that no purer woman than you ever trod this earth!" cried Vitali.

"Oh!" murmured Clotilde, and burying her face in her hands she leaned forward over the table and sobbed in a convulsion of grief that seemed as if it would send the soul from the frail body.

A gendarme was pacing to and fro in the flagged passage outside. His yellow baldric flashed before the gate and his sword clanked. The sunbeams that streamed through the grated window of the parlour touched the golden hair of the weeping sufferer with trembling rays as if caressing them, and Justin Vitali leaned against the wall with his arms folded, his face awry with anguish, and his lips murmuring silent prayers which God in heaven heard.

With an abrupt effort shaking off the emotion which paralyzed him, he applied himself to the urgent task of restoring hope in his client. She had sunk into the apathy when death appears as a blessed relief, and the idea of degradation attaching to a capital sentence had lost all significance in her eyes after the humiliation which she had already undergone. Vitali talked to her of the future without being able to provoke a spark of interest. He returned to the charge, and declared that almost all her countrymen believed in her innocence, and that she must show herself strong for the day when her justification should be made manifest. But all this failed to move her. At last, however, by a display of the strong interest which he himself took in her, and by bidding her answer to the best of her ability a series of questions he would put, he succeeded in making her dry her eyes and exert her

memory, which sufficed momentarily to put despair aside.

"The laudanum which you bought, Madame Desplans, was, I need not ask, to procure the patient rest?"

"Yes; he ordered me to buy it. He used to take several drops at a time to make him sleep. I cannot conjecture whether he took an overdose by intention or accident; for I never suspected he had died by poison until I heard it said here."

"And those letters he wrote?"

"Oh, those letters! they have done nothing else but reproach me with not having posted them," sighed Clotilde, wretchedly. "But it was by Captain Lacroix's orders, given me in moments when he was lucid, that I posted nothing that he wrote while the fits of mania were on him. If a single one of those letters had reached his relations, they would have come and shut him up in a madhouse, to get possession of his property. This he knew, and he used to implore me not to let his deranged state become known. I was not aware of what was in the letters. I never opened them, but laid them aside, hoping always that the captain would recover his reason, and would then destroy them himself. If I had burned his letters, he might have fancied, after his cure, that I had read them—that is, profited by his helpless condition to pry into his secrets."

"And you continued for months nursing Captain Lacroix, and bearing with all his paroxysms? You knew that he accused you of wishing to poison him?"

"Oh, yes! When his hallucinations came, he used to call me murderess and thief; and sometimes he threw things at me. But these attacks never lasted long, and in his lucid intervals he would beseech me so piteously not to let him be shut up, that I had not the heart to hand him over to his friends. I continued hoping to the last."

"One question more," said Vitali, with moist eyes. "Those servants of Captain Lacroix whom you discharged had, I presume, misbehaved themselves?"

"Yes; there were a valet and a housemaid who I found were robbing him of his plate, clothes, wine, and of everything else they could smuggle out of the house. It was the captain himself who told me to send them away, and to take possession of all his keys for him."

"Well, everything is exactly as I thought, Madame Desplans," exclaimed Vitali, in a sudden and buoyant tone of confidence. "Rely on me—promise me to be trustful and hopeful."

Clotilde shook her head.

"I vow that you shall be acquitted," cried Vitali, adjuringly. "I swear to heap confusion on the enemies who have foully traduced you, and to make you leave the court with the respect and pity of all honest men and women showering upon your sweet saintly footsteps like flowers."

"Ah, if I could believe you!" ejaculated Clotilde, stirred by the Corsican's vehemence, and looking at him with eyes in which began to gleam a faint ray of hope.

"Do believe me!" implored Vitali, taking one of her small pale hands and pressing it between both his. "Is there nobody on earth whom you would care to live for—who would have joy in your acquittal—who—?"

"Don't!" exclaimed Clotilde, feverishly withdrawing her hand and abruptly starting back, panting, half wild. "Don't, M. Vitali, put these delusive hopes into my head if they are never to be realized. Will you swear to me that there is the least chance of my being acquitted?"

"There are a thousand chances—all chances are in favour of it!" protested Vitali, ecstatically.

"Ah, then save me! Yes, I implore you to save me!" cried Clotilde, seizing his hands and gazing upon him with impulsive flaming supplication. "Ah yes, I want to live . . . for there *is* a man on earth whom I love. . . . I can trust you, M. Vitali, for you have said you are my friend—are you not? Well, I will tell you what I have told nobody else: the real reason that prevented me from marrying Captain Lacroix, though he so continually implored me, was that I had plighted my troth to another man. You have never heard of him. His name is Henri de Barre, and he is a young engineer. He had no fortune, else he would have married me a year after my husband's death. So we agreed together that he should go to India, where he had a chance of earning a large sum of money in railroad-cutting, and come back in two years to marry me. His term of absence is almost over now, and if I can be saved, save me. Oh yes, save me, I conjure you, for his sake! But if there is no hope for me, then by your feelings as a man, M. Vitali, I entreat you to so manage that all will be over, and that I shall be—dead before he returns! Thus I have given you a secret I thought to carry to my grave; but—but I have another prayer to make. If Henri returns to find me—have—killed me! tell him from me to

take no vengeance on anybody — only ask him to believe in my innocence! Will you promise me that — my friend? Why do you look at me so haggardly? Why are you quaking?"

Why, indeed? Why had Justin Vitali's face turned to marble? Well might he have moaned at that moment, in the words of the Psalmist, "All thy rivers and floods have gone over me!"

VI.

THE trial of Clotilde Desplains attracted to M—— the greatest concourse of strangers that had ever been seen there. How thousands of strangers could hope that there would be room for them in a court of justice which had the greatest difficulty in accommodating two hundred spectators, including unemployed members of the bar, is one of those mysteries which present themselves whenever there is anything worthy of interest to be seen anywhere. Some sight-seers consoled themselves for their exclusion from the court by lingering about its approaches to catch rumours of what was going on within; others mobbed the yellow prison-van that had borne the alleged poisoner from gaol; the greater number haunted the *cafés* and exchanged conjectures, or made bets, about the verdict. The general opinion seemed to be that there would be a conviction. The deputy procurator's indictment had somehow got published in the papers (such documents almost always do) before being delivered in court, and the chain of evidence it furnished seemed powerfully strong. It was not widely known that this deputy procurator, regarding Justin Vitali as his personal enemy since the offer of the procurator-generalship to the latter, had made it a point of honour with himself to obtain the conviction of the Corsican's client, for all means of humbling a rival are good.

He rather overleaped his mark, however, for some of the constructions put upon the prisoner's acts seemed a trifle strained even to the minds of a provincial jury and audience, so that the effect of the indictment, as read in a sing-song voice by the procurator's clerk, was flat. The interrogatory of the prisoner by the presiding judge was the true beginning of the trial, but here a great disappointment was in store for everybody, seeing that Clotilde's answers were so low spoken as to be almost inaudible save to the bench and jury. This made her numerous enemies, and converted not a few once enthusiastic partisans to a belief in her

guilt; for to have obtained tickets of admission after endless difficulties, and then to hear nothing of what is being said, would be trying to the impartiality even of a saint. From the presiding judge's comments it was gathered that the prisoner was giving brief but forcible replies, and that the bench were growing disposed in her favour. It was whispered that Justin Vitali had been closeted with his client for hours and hours day after day, and that he had coached her as to all questions that could possibly be put to her — moreover, that the presiding judge had a high opinion of Vitali, and would be likely to bring out all points favourable to the prisoner for his sake — which was true.

The witnesses deposed to nothing new — to nothing but what the public had known for weeks past, and they were besides an uninteresting class of persons — Captain Lacroix's relatives especially so. The one was a fat merchant, the other a lean doctor who squinted, and the ladies in court could not kindle a spark of interest in such people, who evidently thought more of the deceased man's millions than of himself. In fine, the first day of the trial passed off uneventfully. Vitali only rose once or twice in the day to put cross-questions to witnesses. These questions were keen as blades, and ripped the evidence given into tatters.

Every one remarked the aged look of the brilliant advocate, who was said to be only thirty years old. His shoulders were bent, his face wan and pinched. Those who sat nearest to him noticed that his black hair was streaked with grey. Ever and anon when the witnesses inveighed with more than usual warmth against the prisoner, he turned towards Madame Desplains and nodded with a smile, as if to give her courage. Once he grasped her hand. All day long spectators kept opera-glasses fixed on his features to try and discover traces of anxiety there, and found none. In sum, the impression produced by his attitude was one that did the prisoner good.

On the second day of the trial, which it was known would be the last, the court was more crowded if possible than on the first day; but public speculation as to the result had somehow taken a turn, and without being able to explain why, most people believed that there would be an acquittal. The case of the prosecution was seen to be flimsy: the answers of Clotilde as published in the morning papers appeared fraught with truth — and then Vi-

tali's perfect composure conveyed a presentiment that the defence would be strong. The deputy procurator did not damage his prisoner's case by the speech he made. He was violent, often wild, and Vitali twice tripped him up quietly in inaccuracies of fact. When the luncheon adjournment took place, the audience seemed to be saying: "What, had the prosecution nothing more to say than that? Surely they have a mine in reserve which they will spring by-and-by."

They had no mine, however: and it was evident from the deputy procurator's face when he returned into court that he considered his battle lost. He scowled, and got up to ask Clotilde what was the precise date of her leaving school—why and wherefore no one has yet ascertained.

It was two o'clock when Vitali rose to address the jury. The afternoon sun was shining with a mellow light on his face and on that of the prisoner behind him, and both of them seemed to stand in a glory. During two hours he spoke, and with a quiet force, a dignity, a beauty of eloquence that kept his hearers enthralled. The women who heard him, and who are faultless judges in such cases, said he must have a great grief at heart, for at times it was as though a stream of tears ran through his utterances. But he never quivered or faltered, never missed the thread of his discourse, never let emotion jar upon the melody of his soft, earnest, persuasive tone. He spoke without notes—so full was he of his case—so well did he remember every fact, every date. As his speech progressed, the proofs accumulated by the prosecution seemed to melt like blocks of ice under the sun. Then one by one he took up the atoms, crushed and reduced them to water till nothing seemed to remain, nothing but a universal belief in the prisoner's innocence. When he saw that he had carried his jury—and none had a quicker eye to a jury's mood than Vitali—he came to his peroration. Turning towards Clotilde, who was crying, he pointed to her, and in a voice of unspeakable pity, respect, and kindness, said: "Gentlemen, I leave her in your hands. Look at her. Has she the appearance of a murderess?"

The jury returned their verdict without leaving the box. It was "Not guilty," on all counts, and a tremendous cheer arose in court. At this moment a young man in travelling-garb scaled the seats which separated the auditorium from the court, rushed across the pretorium, and flung himself into Vitali's arms.

"Ah, I can guess," said Vitali in a trembling voice. "You are M. Henri de Barre. Take your bride, sir, and Heaven be with you both!" Saying which he placed the young man's hand in those of Clotilde, who was stretching them across the dock, between the two gendarmes her late custodians, who were brushing honest drops from their eyes.

Some two hours later the beadle of the Church of St. Gudule being about to close the doors of the church, noticed that there was a stranger in one of the lateral chapels. He walked up to him and apprised him that dusk had come. The stranger was kneeling and sobbing like a child. As he rose to go, the beadle opened his eyes, for it struck him that the grief-stricken man bore a strange resemblance to Justin Vitali, whose name was just then in everybody's mouth—even those of beadles.

From The Church Quarterly Review.
SUNDAY-SCHOOL AND LENDING-LIBRARY
LITERATURE.*

WE are not great believers in the good old times. Every one who works in a parish is met by the assurance that in spite of all pains, it gets worse and worse; that men are more drunken, defiant, and pauperized, women, more idle, false, and indifferent, lads, ruder and more unruly and vicious, lasses, more dressy and less modest, and children, more spoilt, pert, and unmanageable.

Some *laudator temporis acti* will throw in our teeth an excellent old man or woman who never knew such doings, or some picture of a whole parish walking to church with prayer-books in white pocket-handkerchiefs, or some model farmer who sat in the kitchen with his men, and read family prayers to them; or, again, our six standards are unfavourably compared with the dame-school that did such a quantity of needlework, with an infinitesimal amount of reading, "and yet look at the servants it turned out."

We do look at some perfection in the way of housekeeper or nurse, and we do not look at nor hear of the number of failures, or rather we see cottage women more or less softened and improved by time and motherhood, and we do not

* 1. *Report of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, for 1875.*

2. *Seventy-sixth Report of the Religious Tract Society.*

3. *The Jubilee Memorial of the Religious Tract Society.*

know what their career in early youth has been.

It is true that the dregs of cities do become worse and worse as civilization corrupts itself, and in all villages where there is some land not in the hands of owners resolved not to tolerate nests of vice, there will be certain sinks of iniquity that no one can reach. But we feel certain that no one who has really been able to trace the history of a parish will find that it has retrograded in civilization, except where there has been recently some unusual instance of neglect, or bad example on the part of clergyman or squire, coming after some equally exceptional instance of care and cultivation.

When one curate attended to six villages;* when the average rector was a sort of squire, who read prayers on Sundays; when squires were only just emerging from the Osbaldiston type; and when farmers met at the village public-house for their evening's amusement, and the old poor-law was destroying all self-respect in the poor, it certainly was not to be expected that their condition would be much above the animal. Probably their actual sustenance was more plentiful at times, but it was more liable to pressure from scarcity; and of other comforts they knew scarcely anything else. It seems as if the life was almost like that of the colonies, with food, but nothing else. When Mrs. Trimmer began her career of charity at Brentford, in 1786, she found that the wages of a man in full work went almost entirely in food, and clothing was so expensive that a thrifty mother is mentioned who bought rags by the pound, and dressed her child in patchwork therefrom; and the wool left on the thornbushes by the sheep was regularly gleaned, spun, and then sent to some handloom-weaver, to supply warmer garments. Hannah More's experience at Cheddar was much the same, and therewith hardly a child at twelve or fourteen knew who made it.

Gray's "rude forefathers of the hamlet" must have been rude indeed. The old man who directs the kindred soul to his supposed monument utters the parenthesis, "for thou canst read," in pointing out his epitaph; and throughout the eighteenth century, it seems that though some country places had small endowed schools, and there was in almost every one a "pri-

vate venture" kept by some old dame, like Shenstone's schoolmistress, or by some disabled man, yet the attendants thereat were not the poor, but the children of the farmers, of the village tradesmen, and often of the parson himself. Now and then an exceptionally bright or favourite child was "put to school" by the clergyman or the squire's lady, but when there, the utmost that was acquired was a certain power of reading, and sometimes of repeating the catechism. The Lenten catechizing in church was kept up by most of the clergy, and sometimes a Bible was given for its complete repetition; but of explanation no one seems to have thought. Mrs. Hare's letters speak of an old woman who confessed to her that she had never understood any more of the catechism than as far as the explanation of the Lord's Prayer, and that the part about the sacraments had always seemed to her "most like nonsense." This, however, was only on the principle on which teaching was universally conducted. No doubt, when there was no printing, and teaching was oral, the doctor and professor must have caught from their pupils' eyes whether their words went home, and found an echo; but when books multiplied, they must have been supposed to do the work of the teacher, and the system on which the world went was, to learn first and understand afterwards. Perhaps the Elizabethan intellects were strong enough, and the seventeenth-century ones eager enough to find the treatment a wholesome stimulus; and, indeed, the language of the literature of the first of these periods had not so far diverged from that of common life as to make books incomprehensible. But the Augustan age of Anne added a passion for Latin words to the lengthy composition of the former age, and amid the general depression of morals and cultivation, owing to a coarse-minded, frivolous court, the language of instruction became more difficult in proportion as the energy to understand it on the part of the learner fell flatter.

It was, probably, to Rousseau that we owe the first touch to the pendulum when it began to swing back towards simplicity and nature, and the change affected educational writing for the poor later than it did that of the rich; chiefly because the dignity of religion, the only subject thought worth teaching them, seemed to require a greater dignity of language. It was the old objection over again against translating the Latin services into a vernacular which seemed irreverent, only in this case

* "In one particular spot, for instance, there are six large parishes without so much as one resident curate. Three commonly gifted curates cannot serve eight churches."—1789. Hannah More to Elizabeth Carter.

the common speech of the educated had grown more abstruse than the standard formulas of devotion, so that the Bible and prayer-book were happily, so far as diction went, a hundred times easier than any comment on them. Nay, people did not know what simplicity meant. If we try to read Mrs. Trimmer's "Fabulous Histories" with a child of our own time, we shall find that after all it is Johnsonian for children. And in our earliest Sunday-school days, we recollect a fearful little tract, stitched into a milk-and-water-coloured wrapper, containing about twenty yellowish pages printed in yellowish type, as an introduction to Scripture history. There was a tradition that it had been used in the school as a reading-book, and one sentence (or rather a part of a sentence) impressed itself on our mind by its enigmaticalness, namely, one in which we were told that after the flood (we beg its pardon, the deluge) Heaven "gave a new sanction to the law of nature." In after-times it dawned on us that this meant the permission to eat flesh. We also remember sentences a page long, probably due to its German origin, for it was a translation, and what ideas the children could have derived from it, it is hard to say.

Sunday schools were commenced between 1785 and 1790, by Mr. Raikes at Gloucester, by Mrs. Trimmer at Brentford, and by Hannah More, in the Cheddar district, and both ladies found themselves obliged to supply the books that were needed. Hannah More was probably the first inventor of the modern tract. She was a woman of real talent, and her "Cheap Repository Tracts" were a power in their day, and a valuable counteraction to the flood of cheap Jacobin publications which had been poured forth. Bishop Porteous begged of her to write an antidote to Tom Paine's publications, and a dialogue called "Village Politics" was the parent of a series of books, published three times a month at twopence apiece. One bound-up volume survived long enough for us to recollect its coarse paper, pale type, and the grimly frightful woodcut outside it, but the tales by Hannah herself were of real literary excellence. "The Shepherd of Salisbury Plain" has a fresh grace about its opening; "Black Giles the Poacher and Tawny Rachel his Wife" furnish a capital story, and "Hester Wilmot, the History of a Schoolgirl," is probably the story of Mrs. More's own experience of many a pupil at Cheddar. It was very interesting in its day. We remember seeing two girls (old women now) reading it

with interlaced arms, when it was far from being a new book, and was only new to them because cultivation had but recently begun in the parish. Mrs. Trimmer wrote also, but schoolbooks rather than tales, and in 1793, her "Scripture Histories and Questions" were accepted by the S.P.C.K. There were two books of tales which we think were hers, of the same date: one a set of conversations in a servants' hall, and accounts of the servants; and another, founded on the custom at Dunmow of giving a fitch of bacon to the wedded couple whose first year has been spent in harmony. The idea was good, but it was not carried out with sufficient spirit or dramatic interest to make the story attractive. Indeed, such elements might then have been thought disturbing and undesirable, for Dr. Wordsworth writes to Joshua Watson:—

Even in many of the Cheap Repository Tracts, merit as many of these have, there is much so novelistic, so partaking of distorted, high-wrought, and extravagant representation in regard to action and manners, that I should be unwilling to contribute actively in their extensive circulation. ("Mem. of J. Watson," vol. i. p. 132.)

The mention of Joshua Watson brings us to what we may call the orthodox revival. It may perhaps surprise those of our readers, who fancy that there were no strong men before Gyas, to know that long before the "Tracts for the Times" came into existence there was a staunch body of devout, earnest, and well-instructed Anglicans, working hard in the cause of the Church, revivifying the two old Church Societies, and creating the National Society, which commenced in 1811. The names of Christopher Wordsworth, Van Mildert, Mant, and Middleton show—in company with that of the devoted merchant, Watson—that there were true and earnest sons of the Church, toiling hard for her in the times which we are apt to slur over as darker than the dark ages. They were in fact the direct continuation of the Caroline divines, working as much as was then possible in the lines traced by good Robert Nelson, and were the true parents of what we now call the Catholic revival.

If Hannah More was a sort of precursor of the Evangelical school, so Mrs. Trimmer was of the Orthodox. Both parties felt the need of care and instruction of the poor with equal force, and both were setting about it vigorously, the one with the more fire and dash, the other with more

caution, staidness, and reverence, but on either side there was much less sense of discordancy of principle or practice than there is in their respective parties at present. An "earnest man," whatever his way of thinking, was as sure to be classed with the Evangelical school, as a religious poor man to be called a "Methody," and in the externals of services there was then little scope for difference.

Soundness of faith was the great care of these excellent orthodox men, and therefore with great distrust of all profession without practice. They made the prayer-book their manual, without full consciousness of all that, so used, it would become to their sons and grandsons, but holding by it, and working for it and by its guidance with all their might, and resisting all that was found wanting when tried by its test.

If we must confess their weak point, we think it was that their taste was too fastidious to make their productions popular. They were mostly men of middle age and high cultivation, with all the grave reverent reserve of the English nature, and the wives and daughters who carried their work among the poor, were ladies of the same high tone of breeding and refinement. They had grown up under schoolmasters who expected them to write English — ay, and to translate *vivâ voce* in Addisonian language — and accused them of spoiling their taste with the Waverley novels (now a serious holiday task). And they had a strong feeling that everything relating to religion must be grave and dignified, which was perfectly true; but partly from the general bald and denuded classic taste for simplicity of the age in which they lived, partly from the old Puritan traditions, they had little notion of connecting any but intellectual beauty with holiness. And, above all things, they were enamoured of "the sobriety of the Christian religion," and looked with dread upon excitement as almost sure to be coupled with instability. Effervescence seemed to them a thing to be deprecated, and they did not see that there might be souls lost for want of the appeal to the feelings which they distrusted as unreal and fugitive. And, on the other hand, the dread of dulness is one of Satan's strongest implements.

To hearts like theirs, the services of the Church in their utmost plainness were precious and beautiful, and they would have resented with loyal defiance any hint that others could find them tedious. "The fault must be in those who found them wearisome." There was real truth in what they said, and their own children grew up

to the same fervent attachments, and felt the benefit of the discipline of the stillness and reverence of their youth.

But in dealing with the uneducated, they scarcely succeeded as well. There is a certain class of peasant, now passing away, belonging to the same mould as these men themselves, men and women both of a gentle, serious, grave mould, such as they themselves term "solemn." These accepted gladly such training as theirs. The old labourer would sit (he was seldom taught to kneel) with his chin on the top of his staff, looking like Jacob, and would worship faithfully.

Dim or unheard the words may fall,
And yet the heaven-taught mind
May learn the sacred air, and all
The harmony unwind.

These and their children gathered up such fragments as reached their understanding, loved the echoes, and grew in that devout comprehending by the soul, which is a different thing from that by the intellect.

The literature supplied was of the kind to suit this frame of mind. It was quite unimpeachable both in matter and manner, but very scanty, and adapted to a very select few. It must have chanced to some of us to fall heirs to the lending libraries presented by former clergy of this type. There are usually from twenty-five to thirty books, all bound alike in stout brown calf, with red letter-pieces, and very strong meat they are; Bishop Wilson's "Sermons" and Nelson's "Fasts and Feasts" being as invariable as Hume and Gibbon in the library of a country-house, and the only approach to narrative being a judicious selection from Hannah More's "Cheap Repository Tracts."

One or two were in the catechetical form, with answers extending through a whole page, standard divinity of course, but it is difficult to imagine how they were supposed to be used in cottages. Perhaps the readers were then only superior people who would really care to make these books a study, and find out the references; but for this the time allowed for keeping the books was too short. It is more likely that when they were read, it was in a dreamy manner, with a finger under the line, the lips forming the words, the mind occupied with the difficulty of conning them, and a general sense of performing a sacred duty, but with an infinitesimal amount of new impression. Yet, that such books as these had their use and value is shown by such an anecdote as the following, which we extract from a privately

printed memorial of the Rev. Duke Yonge, vicar of Cornwood, Devon, who died in 1823:—

He left a sum to be spent in books for distribution among the parishioners of —; bread sown upon the waters, of which at least a crumb might be said to be found after many days by one of his sons and his nephew, who going into a small outlying cottage belonging to — there found an old infirm crippled man, one of those beautiful instances of peace and content based on the highest and surest grounds, which are sometimes met with, shining brightest in the depths of poverty and suffering. His delight and comfort were his Bible and a book named "The Pious Parishioner Instructed," one of those of Mr. Yonge's bequest, and these he valued above everything. Dissenters had striven to shake his faith, had offered him newer books, and had laughed at him for adhering to these alone, but he held fast to them, his only comfort, saying "where should he be but for them?"

This was in 1849 or 1850. *Per contra*, in an excellent paper on "Parish Lending Libraries," which appeared in 1873, in the *Monthly Packet*, "The Pious Parishioner" is cited as the *ne plus ultra* of dreariness. And certainly the sound and cleanly condition in which the volumes descended to new-comers, did not speak much for their popularity. Indeed, the very fact of being able or willing to read such books at all in the labouring class bespoke an exceptional superiority of intellect and perseverance which might be capable of grappling with the difficulty.

Literature for children there was almost none. Even for children of the upper classes there were hardly any religious books, though secular ones had begun to multiply, and Mrs. Hemans made a true representation when she mentioned Miss Edgeworth's "Parents' Assistant" as the most suitable book the little gentlefolks could lend to a poor boy. Mrs. Trimmer's books were read and her expositions yawned over in the dining-rooms, where children did their lessons before school-rooms became an institution; but besides this, there was little that was orthodox.

There were two standard books on the catechism for schools. Gentlemen's children were supposed to understand it by the light of nature. They generally did really learn it, and repeat it every Sunday; but as to any special instruction in it, even before confirmation, we have often heard a lady, who was confirmed about the year 1810 or 1812, say that her examination consisted of "Well, my dear, I suppose you know all about it;" and that a little later her godfather, a clergyman, wishing to

know if she had been confirmed, politely said, "Has any bishop had the honour of laying his hands on your head?"

She, like many another, discovered her lack of knowledge on becoming the manager of a Sunday school, where the two above-mentioned books were the authorized S.P.C.K. ones, namely, "The Broken Catechism," which merely made the answers into fragments, and "Crossman's Catechism," which dealt in explanations. They were not bad, but rather "cut and dried," and when the children once learnt them by heart, the answers came parrot-like, and served to darken knowledge by obviating all need of thinking, and concealing the entire incomprehension. But there was much excuse for these learning-by-rote fashions. Every lady alike was so taught before the Edgeworth days, on the principle that if the memory were supplied, understanding would follow. There was no such thing as a trained teacher; masters and mistresses were retired servants or tradespeople; no one expected a mistress to do more than teach reading, working, and correct repetition. If she could write or sum herself, it was an extra, paid for at a high rate by the *petite noblesse*, but not encouraged by the patrons of the school. Sense and meaning were left to be put in at the Sunday school, and if the clergyman or a lady or two could ask original questions or awaken intelligence themselves, their helpers, if they had any, had no notion of anything beyond the barest words in the book. So, much of the children's time was spent in sitting learning by heart these little catechisms, while other classes were being heard. "Faith and Duty" and "First Steps to the Catechism" were other varieties, generally learnt in the Sunday school itself, and, it may be feared, serving more to occupy time than give much instruction to unawakened minds.

Hymns were another difficulty. Dr. Mant attempted them, but was far too scholarly, and had not swing enough to be popular. Heber wrote perfect hymns, but not enough. Dr. Watts and Jane Taylor, being Dissenters, were looked on with doubt. The lady's theology is—if we remember right—not distinctive enough to have anything dangerous. Watts had too much point, and here and there too much beauty not to make his way. He has been too much decried by those, who have fastened only on his vehement Calvinist verses. We should be sorry for a generation of English children to rise not knowing "The Little Busy Bee," nor

"The Rose." And his "Sunday Hymn" has a vigour in its simplicity which always makes it the first note of joy in our own somewhat old-fashioned mind on Easter-day.

This is the day when Christ arose
So early from the dead;
Why should I keep my eyelids closed
And waste my hours in bed?
This is the day when JESUS broke
The powers of death and hell;
And shall I still wear Satan's yoke,
And love my sins so well?

The latter part is not so successful, and stories are told, with what truth we know not, of children who derived no pleasant impression from "'Tis like a little heaven below" applied to a weary service, endured either in a conventicle or stewed up in a narrow gallery, unable to see or hear, or if they did, to understand, with no change of posture, but standing, or sitting on an uncomfortable little bench.

Still Watts furnished the pleasantest part of the old Sunday-school programme. For reading — except in the favoured Bible-class — a superior few — was so severe a labour and so unconnected with the meaning, that we remember great discomposure at an attempt to substitute some S. P. C. K. reading-books about the patriarchal history for some containing "the discourses," because the latter, having no proper names in them, were considered the easier.

Unsatisfactory as was the system, it was the beginning of better things. Personal influence did much, the holy Word itself more, and the good old and elderly people of our parishes, "dear to the pastor's aching heart," are the children thus taught, nay, who often seemed to have slipped through the meshes, but on whom old recollections have returned. We are convinced that the real estimate of the benefit of Sunday schools is to be made rather from the old than from the young. Even as we write, a newly issued parish magazine, in its "parish department," produces some verses from the recitation of an old woman who learnt them at school more than fifty years ago. We have found them in the *Cottager's Monthly Visitor* for 1821; and only two lines and one epithet have been forgotten in the half-century. This same *Cottager's Monthly Visitor* was one of the first — if not the very first attempt at magazines for the poor. It was begun in 1821, by Dr. George Davys, then Dean of Chesham, and afterwards Bishop of Peterborough, who acted as tutor to her Majesty.

As bishop, we are used to think of him as one terrified by the advance of Catholic principles, and holding the helm with a timid hand, having in effect made up his bundle of opinions long ago, and not being able to undo them to admit fresh ones. But in these younger days, when it was possible for a man to be of no party, he was in many respects in advance of the time, and this same magazine was a real boon to parish workers. Nor do we think it compares unfavourably with Mr. Erskine Clarke's, to which every one comes in time, though everybody wishes for a better. The contents of one number are, a little paper on the Church service, more elementary than would now be required by grown-up readers; a letter with a history of the kings of Rome, with some rather funny elucidations and moralizings, both these being parts of a series; another paper of good advice how to act in case of fire, and a very pretty explanation of Burns' "Cottar's Saturday Night." Next stands "Cowpock," reminding us that vaccination was still a matter of choice; a conversation on the benefits of reading, a protest against fairs, an extract from a sermon, a bit of natural history, a cottage receipt, a few religious extracts, and "extracts from newspapers," the first being the account of the death of Princess Elizabeth, Queen Adelaide's only child. There is no serial story. If a tale went on into a second number, it was unusual, and thus each number was complete in itself. Probably the readers had not then that peculiar memory of the imagination which can carry on the interest from month to month, and which seems to be a matter of cultivation, since the same lack is found both in younger children and in the lower and rougher classes to whom ladies read.

The *Cottager* had a career of about twenty years, and we do not think it has been equalled in some respects by any of its successors, as a village "monthly." The "useful information," about accidents and emergencies, gardens and the like, was relished by the cottage readers, and was often valuable to them. The fault was the feebleness of both the theology and the history, but part of this was owing to the period, and it seems to us to have had the best framework of any of the magazines of the kind. Its lesser companion, the *National School Magazine*, was not its equal, and did not last long.

By this time (from 1820 to 1840 roughly stated) all tolerably cared-for parishes had

their Sunday school, and almost all decent families educated their children. The exceptions were the rough, wandering ne'er-do-weels, those who had a quarrel with the parson or the ladies, and among the better sort the eldest girl, who was often made the family drudge, while her sisters got all the schooling. Boys too were taken away so early that, unless they had a real turn for their book, they forgot everything. But there was a reading public wherever a good school had been a few years in operation, and not much for it to read.

The books that every one had heard of and cared to read were "Robinson Crusoe," the "Pilgrim's Progress," "Pamela," and the translation of Gesner's prose idyll of "The Death of Abel." The S.P.C.K. supplied the first, on the supplemental catalogue, and at a high price, but it could not adopt John Bunyan because of his doctrine. We own that we should much like to see an edition, in which all that is really Calvinistic were omitted, and in which a brief preface or notes might point out what is defective in the most masterly of all allegories. Such a course, if frankly avowed, would not be liable to the objections urged (whether justly or unjustly, we do not pause to consider) by Lord Macaulay against Dr. Neale's treatment of the "Pilgrim's Progress;" though that treatment had, on Macaulay's own showing, been anticipated in a different direction by an ultra-Calvinistic editor of the book. As to the other two books, they are consigned to the oblivion in which they may very well rest.

In the mean time the Evangelical school was much more active in providing for the young and uneducated. The Religious Tract Society had been set on foot in the first year of the century, by Mr. Burden, a Congregationalist minister, of Coventry, and a number of other good and devout men, both of the Church and out of it, who deserve the praise of having done much to keep the spark of religion alive in the slumber of the Church. What they termed their "golden rule" was, that each tract should convey an outline of the way of salvation, so that a person who never saw any other book might still see that faith was the means of being saved. This was their one watchword, no more bond was required, and some of their most active agents sat so loose to all forms, that people doubted to what denomination they belonged. Simplicity and adaptation were their first study, and the committee, we are told, often changed

long words for short ones, and tried to reach every class, as they certainly did. It was not, however, till after nearly twenty years that children's books began to be studied, and the stories brought out that so enlivened the Sunday. Leigh Richmond's "Dairyman's Daughter," though not written for children, was eagerly read, and was the favourite Sunday-school prize for many years; indeed, even now we believe, "Little Jane's" grave is an attraction to Brading churchyard. Nor is there any doubt that to many the history did lasting benefit. There were useful Scripture catechisms, hitting off the style of language required, though not always what could be otherwise wished. We remember one, which to the question—"Who was Eutychus?" replied, "A young man at Troas, who, falling asleep at sermon, fell down and was taken up dead,"—in which condition it left him, apparently for fear of weakening the awful warning against "falling asleep at sermon."

Stories abounded, and were often very good, but it is a curious fact with regard to both poor people's and children's literature, that what pleases one generation seldom suits another, unless they are intelligent enough to receive it as matter of curiosity. Perhaps the reason may be that the very best of such literature is only at the utmost second or third rate, and by the hands of women, to whom it seems to be given to speak effectively to their own contemporaries, but to fall short with posterity.

Mrs. Sherwood seems to have been one of the first to discover the art of writing for the poor from their own point of view, not sentimentalizing about them. "Susan Gray," the book with which she began, is what would now be called sensational—the story of the temptations of a young seamstress by a man in the rank of a gentleman. She runs away from the mistress, who had purposely left her unprotected, is caught in a thunder-storm, and dies of the wetting. The descriptions of Ludlow and of the surroundings are written with that grace of simplicity which made Mrs. Sherwood so successful. It appears by her life that she had no idea that it would be taken up as a religious tale for the poor; she simply wrote it under the compulsion of the imagination, and sold it to a local bookseller before she went to India, and then returned after many years to find it immensely popular. This led her to write other tales for the poor, with plots of a more desirable style. None were devoid of talent, and most had a cer-

tain sort of pathos, which only suffered by being too often repeated. Two of her stories—"Henry and his Bearer" and "Lucy and her Dhaye"—were the male and female counterparts of one another, both turning on the child's longing to send the gospel back to the much-loved Hindoo attendant. A third, "Emma and her Nurse," was much the same thing in an English dress, but it had a charm to a child reader in the minute account of the little lady and the awe-struck village girl in the great mansion, veiled and only inhabited by the nursery establishment since the death of the lady of the manor.

Mrs. Sherwood's doctrine was of a strange shifting description, and thus the religious part of her books was not to be depended upon. People used, however, in the days of dearth of all easy religious literature, to have her stories, and others of the same tendency, in their nurseries and schools. Some were excellent. Nothing could be said against a selection from them, and there are some which we recollect with pleasure to this day, though what pictures they had! Woodcuts were expensive luxuries then, and the illustrations in children's books were almost as hard worked as the portraits in the *Nuremberg Chronicle*; and after we had learnt to accept one big-headed boy in a monkey suit all over buttons as good Charlie being instructed by his uncle, we met him again as wicked Dick mocking his grandfather. Wherever there was a missionary story there appeared the same black man kneeling before a clergyman in gown and bands, with a book in his hand, which he is apparently presenting to the negro. (Though, by-the-by, these pleasing incongruities are not yet gone by. This very Christmas we encountered Cinderella and her prince in stage mediæval costumes, being married by an English bishop in lawn sleeves.)

Three books on the Commandments, "The Week," "The Guilty Tongue," and "The House of the Thief," stand out in our recollection as having conveyed distinct ideas of duty. One or two of Charlotte Elizabeth's were also very worthy, but, going back to our own childhood, we are quite sure that we imbibed a great deal from this our Sunday literature, that was never suspected by those who provided it, and that required correction by definite teaching. We say this, because we wish to impress that the doctrinal tendency of such books is not so unimportant as people are apt to think when giving them to the young and partly educated,

and we think it quite possible that the Dissent into which young people trained in Church schools used to lapse twenty or thirty years ago, was rendered attractive, not only by their awakened spiritual needs, which the Church system was not then expansive enough to satisfy, but by the whole drift of their reading, which made conversion, whether through church or meeting, the paramount matter of importance.

All these agencies for spreading good books have always been liable to one fatal, though amiable error. The really able start them with clever and valuable works in their way, not without literary value and with a power and force of application which renders them like the best hymns, common to all. But these are sure to be swamped in a marsh of imitators, the good by the goody. There is a fatal leniency to "what can do no harm and is on the right side,"—written "by a very deserving person," either in great need, or "who would be so much pleased." So weakness is accepted, and "the right side" is represented by writings of limited views, which give nothing but its lower and feebler border.

So the Tract Society, we fear, forgot the salutary sternness with which a member in the olden days denounced before the author's face a tract as "a very poor thing *indeed*." It came to deal in an endless and proverbial supply of small children who accosted strangers with "Are you a Christian?" of ladies in white feathers one day on horseback, and white feathers on their hearse on another; of consumptive young ladies and gentlemen, and little boys and girls who so uniformly died as to lead to a conviction that it was very dangerous to take to early piety. Most young people do like the contemplation of melancholy, and delight in dreaming of the breaking of blood-vessels and slaughter of little children, in widows in their weeds, with their bright locks escaping when at play with their children, and in young widowers embracing the babe that has cost them so dear, and the gratification of these tastes diluted the fiction of the Tract Society; while its tracts themselves, sown broadcast in strange places, may here and there have done good, but in general excited antagonistic feelings. They had the fault of being almost all aimed at conversion, rather than at subsequent building-up, and they somewhat travestied St. Paul's determination of the only thing he would "know" in his preaching, not seeing that what should always underlie all teaching,

should not be constantly and even tritely overlaid. So most of these little books were either beginnings or endings, conversions, or death-beds, and the practical effect came to be, that the second generation, after avoiding the fatal effects of infant conversion, thought themselves at liberty to amuse themselves as they pleased, without any attention to devotion, until they should "get religion" like an infection. Miss Simpson's Yorkshire experiences among farm-lads, as detailed in "Ploughing and Sowing," show several instances of this frame of mind.

The secular books of the time were the *Penny* and *Saturday Magazines*, which were eagerly relished by young artisans, and by young people of any education. Many of us still look back to the pleasure their admirable papers gave us, such as those on the "Robin Hood Ballads" and the "Nibelungenlied." But the country labourer was not educated enough to care for them, and, indeed, the first notes of the movement for his advancement were sounded so defiantly as to fill with alarm and hostility those with whom his training rested. The fallacy of education without religion was manifest enough to them, and they appealed to experience in favour of religion without education; or, rather, with only just enough to read the Bible and prayer-book. They failed to fathom the ignorance and misapprehension of their average scholar, and did not see how much his religion wanted intelligence; while, as to those of higher ability, it could only be exceptional saints who would feel the narrow bounds assigned to their minds suffice them. It would have been wiser sooner to have seized on the Mechanics' Institute and the popular science lecture, and to have wakened the village school into more intelligent teaching, instead of keeping writing an "extra," lest girls should write to their sweethearts, and making needlework the aim and end of the schoolgirl's existence. After all, however, it was rather the elderly Ladies Bountiful who erred in this respect, and who had really seen good servants and housewives grow up under their *régime*, to whom needlework was the most valuable acquisition brought from school.

The younger clergy and the younger ladies were anxious to take up the cultivation of the intellect at the same time as that of the soul, but they had no tools to work with until the days of training-schools. One master, in a remote country village, we confess, was heard, about twenty-five years ago, explaining the slides

of a magic lantern: "This, my dear children, is the howl, the king of birds, so called because he is the only bird what can look at the sun without winking"—deceived, we suppose, by the regal looks of the great eagle-owl.

In general, too, it was found that though the brighter village children, girls especially, eagerly listened to the small explanations of geography, grammar, or history made to them, it was but writing on sand when taught in this amateur way. There was nothing to keep it up at home or abroad, in school or out, no associations to give it reality, and it was not remembered from week to week; being, indeed, viewed by mistress and mothers as the lady's fancy, interrupting more useful things, and "not fit for poor people."

Meantime there was a great accession of excellent matter for the reading to and of the children. Their intellectual capacity had been gauged at last, and by people who had literary talent and discrimination, and wrote in the thought of the great purpose ever with them, but without obtruding it.

About 1840 there began, under the auspices of Mr. James Burns, then a member of our Church, that issue of little books, life-like as the best of the Tract Society, and avoiding the didactic parents who had begun to appear in S.P.C.K. books, making children a judicious speech of a page long, when the very best cottage mother of real life would have merely used the more striking eloquence of "the stick." Now, the mothers in "The Apple Tree" (ominous name), "The White Kitten," "The Red Shawls," and the like, were not at all above the average cottage woman. When Bill is found with a surreptitious apple in his pocket, "father" takes him out of "mother's hearing," and executive justice follows. The overworked mother in "Margaret Fletcher," whose children on hot summer nights tumble out of bed, and roll about the floor crying, sends her daughter to be little maid at a small public-house, just as mothers do, simply to get rid of one hungry mouth, and then freely confesses that it is a bad place for a girl. The young lady who comes as a stranger even makes a mistake as to who ate the jam, and the mother's indignation is rough and motherly, until the real lady of the school comes home, and character overcomes the force of supposed circumstantial evidence.

There were very useful little books of conversational teaching, too, upon the prayer-book, the burial service etc., which

we are sorry to miss from the lists, for they were useful to read with younger classes. "Conversations on the Church Service" and "Conversations on the Saints' Days" were very useful in the same way; indeed, we do not think the last have been equalled for a tender poetry of dealing with the spirit of the day, being often either the "Christian Year" or Dr. Newman's "Sermon" reduced into easy language.

High thoughts in plain words were the characteristic of much of this literature. "Conversations with Cousin Rachel" has the "Christian Year" for the fifteenth Sunday after Trinity beautifully simplified, so as to read like one of Mrs. Barbauld's prose hymns. Bishop Wilberforce's little classic of "Agathos" likewise belonged to this period, and so does an anonymous story called "Ivo and Verena," a sort of La Motte Fouqué for children, not exactly an allegory, but a story of the dawn of Christianity in the north.

There were two magazines started at this time: the *Penny Post*, and the *Magazine for the Young*. The first was intended to be an improved *Cottage*; it is still flourishing, but it has somehow missed of the function of supplying cottage reading. It has become too archæological, and not simple or practical enough to interest country poor; the type is too small, and the whole seems to suit more with the class who ask small and curious questions on the dedications of churches and the histories of obscure saints. There is almost always a little allegory in it, and the serial stories seem to be always about the great rebellion. We cannot fancy a labourer after his day's work caring to sit down and read it; but it has its own field among a somewhat more cultivated class, who have acquired what it is the fashion to call Catholic tastes.

The *Magazine for the Young* was better adapted to the purpose it undertook. The papers in it were so excellent of their kind from the first that many of them have been republished. We think, however, that after the first ten or fifteen years, it was allowed to drift a little out of the school-child level, and to have more than a due proportion of young ladies and gentlemen, though all were thoroughly clever and sensible stories. We are very sorry that the rage for illustrations has led to this excellent little book being supplanted by others, which, to our mind, are far from equalling it in ability, so that 1875 saw its last number, after a course of thirty-three years of well-sustained excellence.

To review the literature of this class for these thirty-three years would be impossible. We have pointed to the principal sources, and we will now try to classify the kind of reading they provide.

First, however, we must observe that there is a great change as to the power of reading. The exceptions are now those who cannot read. Girls have seldom left school for many years past without being able to read well; and boys, though the vocal performance may be as bad as possible, can read enough to be able to understand the meaning of a paragraph in after life. The intelligent ones will eagerly read anything that interests them, but, on the one hand, we no longer have the monopoly of cheap reading for them; and on the other, that patient steadiness which would toil through a long book in long words, as a serious solemn task, has nearly vanished from all classes alike. If we wish to catch the attention of the many, and give them pure examples from an undefiled well, we must make it as attractive as the undesirable literature in flaming covers which is poured on them, or the serial tales in cheap and inflammatory newspapers.

For this reason we are glad of the recent requirement of the code for elementary schools, that a classical piece of English poetry should be repeated and explained, since this becomes the key to much language, cultivates the taste, and prevents absolute want of comprehension from barring the way to all but the idlest and most easy reading. Still too much must not be expected — masters and mistresses and pupil-teachers, who are exerting their minds all day, should hardly be blamed if they are too wearied for "self-improvement" in the intervals, and though it is easy to say that a good walk or a little household work would be the best thing for the young woman, she can seldom walk safely out of school-hours in the winter, and there often is no domestic business for her to do, especially by candle-light. And if she be harassed and inclined to work her brain overmuch about her examination, or troubles about her pupils, needlework leaves the thoughts free for perplexities, while a wholesome and moderately interesting story diverts the mind much more effectually. Indeed the female readers can hardly be expected to read for intellectual self-improvement's sake. A girl with a true thirst for knowledge is very rare, and there is nothing to awake it or keep it up in women of the lower and lower-middle classes. All that

even well-taught young women of the dressmaker and artisan degree are likely to care for is, what is either "interesting" or "sweetly pretty;" but it is quite possible so to cultivate and refine their tastes as to make them dread and turn aside from low sensational reading, and by tales and poetry, the kind of pathos and sentiment that they can relish, to make them love what is pure, devout, and noble, and to set high-minded and elevating examples before them. The good ones, too, will read directly religious books, some as a duty, and others as a pleasure.

Lads, on the other hand, who have some intelligence and ambition, especially if put to trades that only occupy their hands, often do like instructive reading, and will pursue it in after life. They need a full supply of such books as may so pre-occupy them that they need not go for excitement or for information to literature where they would get it intermingled with attacks on their faith and principles.

It is of no use to try to keep exclusively to books written for any class in these days. The savour of condescension in such books is very distasteful to those for whom they are meant, and considering that almost every book that has any name or fame soon comes within their reach, it is better to provide them with whatever is really and intrinsically good, without going into the minutiae of agreement with our own opinions. If these are freely conceded, they are more likely to trust those who withhold from them what is really mischievous or degrading, and what no one ought to like. Books with much slang in them, with a poor weak style of sentiment, and such as indulge in the repetition of bad language in conversation, even where the morals are not amiss, should, however, be excluded. Whatever tends to exalt, purify, and refine the ideas of courtship and marriage is likely to be valuable. The horror with which the last generation looked on novel-reading left young girls to the very poorest and most unwholesome sentiment on the subject that most excites them, and good sound examples, even in a higher rank than their own, is more likely than anything else to improve their tone and raise their ideal. Such novels as Dinah Muloch's "A Noble Life," Mrs. Gaskell's "Mary Barton," some of Lady Emily Ponsonby's best, and the like, are really desirable reading.

Delicate, humorous character-drawing is not appreciated without a very different amount of cultivation, sometimes not then. Some people do not care for close

portraiture of the Austen school, but want what feeds their imagination and takes them out of themselves, and the love of exact delineation is much more frequent in the upper classes than the lower—and, reason good, they find themselves described from their own level and point of view, whereas no writing about or for a shop-girl or dressmaker can be other than at the best patronizing, often satirizing, and with about as much truth as a foreigner's delineations of natives, and we all know what they are. Therefore we believe a sensible story of a lady by a lady likely to be twice as useful to a maid as the lady's endeavour to portray an ideal maid.

The so-called "tale," of which Miss Sewell's and Miss Yonge's are the types, is eagerly devoured and is a sort of medium between the novel and the child's book; and it is one that is apt to be accepted without question, and a few years ago, the mere fact of a book being in one or two volumes, instead of three, would decide that it was "a tale;" and therefore supposed to be innocent. But fashion has altered this a good deal. We have all seen very mischievous books in this lesser line, and on those that profess to be mildly useful, we should recommend library managers to exercise a sharp supervision, and to condemn mawkishness and twaddle as ruthlessly as more serious evils. Their girl-readers may like it, but it will only lower their taste, and it is not well that they should be reading what their fathers, brothers, and lovers can only see through and deride. Their books on every account should be rather *above* than *below* them. Their age is full of enthusiasm and sentiment. That which girls of the upper ranks are now apt to disdain, with some harshness and rudeness in their scorn, is to this lower degree the gilding of life, and to kindle their admiration for anything really noble and worthy may save them from those silly and inferior forms of romance which are the special bane of their station.

The semi-educated enjoy tears; and pathos like that of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," which is rather in excess for us, is a great recommendation to them. Anything really good of its kind is to be accepted, while poor and weak stories should not be tolerated, because they are written to uphold our own opinions in Church matters. Hesba Stretton's "Bede's Charity," or Mrs. Whitney's "We Girls" are, for instance, far better reading than stories that the *Churchman's Companion* has some-

times too readily admitted, and which are only poor novels with a dash of daily services, early celebrations, and Sisters of Mercy.

Nothing that actually leads up to Dissent, or tends to confound the idea of the need of a distinct dogmatic faith, ought on any account to be admitted, though absolute direct enunciation of our own opinions is by no means necessary, provided the morality be sound. Miss Kavanagh's "Madeleine," an old book now, giving the story of the noble exertions of a French peasant girl to found a hospital, has always been found most popular and stirring, and though of course her Roman Catholicism is taken for granted, it simply comes in as the religion of her country, and would do nobody any harm. None of this lady's other tales approached this one in excellence, or would be useful to lend, and we mention this one as an instance of the way in which the superiority of the tale outweighs all difference of opinions.

We do not know how often to reiterate that caterers for lending libraries should be intolerant of mediocrity. The difficulties are great, for, on the one hand, the readers are apt to be eager devourers of all that requires no effort, and, on the other, critics are so merciful to the well-intentioned that their praise is not always faint enough to imply condemnation, while hundreds of writers think that at least they can write a child's religious tale, and contentedly repeat and dilute somebody else.

For instance, "Michael the Chorister" was written in early days, while yet Burns was the chief publisher of Church literature. It was a thoroughly touching simple story of a little cathedral chorister, who, after a few trials from bad companions, gets run over, partially recovers, goes for the last time to the cathedral, and dies.

He was the precursor to a swarm of affected little choristers, always with angelic feelings, generally persecuted, uniformly sentimental about their surplices, with some tendency to confound them with the snow, and sure not only to sing better than anybody else, but to die early. Whereas those who know the British chorister as a tough little mortal, addicted to bolting bulls'-eyes, apples, or any other delicacies of the season, at the last moment, if not to concealing them under his surplice, to shirking practice, to playing marbles in unexpected places, to staring wildly about, and on a recall to order, to bawling as if he were scaring birds, it seems as if it *might* be wiser and more useful to depict him as neither quite an angel nor quite a fiend.

Again, the late Mrs. Gatty opened a new and almost original mine of treasure in her "Parables of Nature," which she could give to perfection, both as being a student of natural history, and a person of deep and varied thought and reading. But ever since we have been inundated with talking rivers, discontented primroses, moralizing robins, etc., etc., etc, *usque ad nauseam*, till the imitation almost spoils the reality.

So with allegories. John Bunyan, Bishop Wilberforce, Mr. Adams, and Mr. Munro (the last at a long interval, and perhaps only in "The Combatants") have given real substantial interpretations and ideas that echo and re-echo in our minds; but they have provoked a swarm of imitators, who, taking a most unwarrantable liberty with the angels, as something between showmen and fairies, introduce us to endless children in boats, on mountains, and in swamps, all weakening the original impression, and creating an impatience of the very name of allegory.

In all these things, and many other branches of reading, the essentially good first model is the thing to have and keep to exclusively, for the ill-written, loosely-put-together, half-digested work that is freely poured out as fit for poor children, can—even for those who like it—only prevent the taste from rising to accept better food, and sometimes confuse the mind. Happily, the really good is sure to be cheap, and the price of a book is generally in inverse ratio to its work, so that it is easier to supply the cream of literature than the scum. No—we will not call it scum—but buttermilk.

Street Arabs have become very popular subjects. We can point to two or three excellent stories of this class, such as "Little Meg's Children" and "Froggy's Little Brother," which will dissolve a whole class, and still more, a whole mother's meeting, in tears; but there is a strong tendency to write of lovely waifs with shining hair (spite of being unkempt) who wander into churches, and there show an appreciation of the service, such as experience would be thankful to detect in their schooled and trained contemporaries; after which they either die a pious and edifying death, or are proved to be the children of the long-lost daughters of their patrons' cooks.

The need of a catastrophe is the bane of the unoriginal in these stories, and thence arises a pernicious sort about the troubles of young servants. It began in the early days of the Evangelical school, when all

large houses were assumed to belong to fashionable and worldly people, with wicked servants. The little nursery-maid regularly tried to teach the children to say their prayers, was rebuked by the mamma for making them melancholy, spited by the nurse for refusing to connive at her drinking wine in the butler's pantry, was all but convicted of theft on the evidence of her mistress's jewelry, hidden in her boxes by the other servants' malice, and finally established her innocence by saving some one from being burnt to death.

This class of story is not quite extinct, and must send little girls out in a nice frame of mind for being put under the upper servants who have to train them. There is a capital story, named "I do not Like it," which exactly shows the probable career of the spoilt pet of a village school and an easy home.

The principal supplies of books are at present from the S.P.C.K., the Religious Tract Society, and the Sunday School Institute, besides the host of "private venture" books. S.P.C.K. is admirable in a negative point of view, but to the negative it has far too often sacrificed the positive. Its supervision is too timid, minute, and arbitrary for it to be able to secure first-class authors, but it never drops into the absolutely foolish, and here and there has something of real merit. Its tracts — properly so called — are greatly improved of late years, and there is a series on the offices of the Church, which, compared with Bishop Davys's "Village Conversations," would be a curious landmark of the average intelligence of the supposed reader.

Hymns are pretty well provided for by Mrs. Alexander's beautiful work in that line. We are sorry that the Rev. Isaac Williams's "Hymns on the Catechism" are out of print, for they are rarely excellent as expositors of doctrine, and not too long, the only fault of Mrs. Alexander's.

The Religious Tract Society has an excellent collection, not only of tales, but of books of natural history and travels; and those who are collecting prizes or lending-library books ought certainly to make a selection among these, though, if they are ordered without examination, we may chance to light on something that exalts conversion at the expense of sacramental grace, or which makes it a hopeful sign in a Romanist to die without the sacraments. These, however, are becoming the exceptions, and there are many admirable stories on the list, conveying Catholic

truth. We do not mean what some people call "distinctively Catholic teaching," but much that is really sound and orthodox, and useful to members of the Church. Indeed, we fancy it would have somewhat startled the excellent founders!

The Sunday-School Institute puts out good books for teachers to use, but what we have hitherto seen of its tales have been feeble and much too controversial. It would be giving a mere catalogue to attempt to mention the books we have found best adapted for village use; besides, parishes vary much in taste and intelligence, so that what is popular in one may be useless in another, and a judicious caterer will acquire a sort of second instinct as to what will be liked and be useful. This is the only way of doing the thing. To order down a society's collection and disperse them, is not likely to produce healthful assimilation, but people's needs and likings must be known and cultivated, and in a varying manner, according to their understanding, *e.g.* the young children, and any parish where the people are still very simple and little in the way of anything but what the clergyman gives them, need receive only what is fully accordant with his views, but the growing youth and men of towns will not be content with this, and he will do them more good by showing them how to read a book with undesirable portions in it than by withholding it altogether.

After all, some will say, what has all this trouble done? There is a long way between reading a book and acting on it. Sunday-school children flock for their books, tracts are exchanged at every door by district visitors, but is the population better than when, one hundred years ago, Mrs. Trimmer, Hannah More, and Mr. Raikes began the work? The towns, taking them as a whole, are possibly in some respects worse. There has been the factory system, there were fifty years of torpidity of the Church, and besides the general tendency to corruption in masses, infidelity has come down to the populace.

But, on the other hand, the Church organization has now so penetrated these regions, that no one who wishes for better things can fail to know where to look for them, and any upward aspiration is met and fostered.

And in the country, though the machinery has often been sluggishly and insufficiently worked, and can only be so thoroughly where the clergyman and the squire are devoted, zealous, and united, yet the

average standard has risen. The foul nests of shameless vice that used to be acquired in a sort of hopeless way in the early years of the century are seldom to be found in villages now, and where they exist, the decent neighbours are not callous to the scandal. The standard of morality is not what it ought to be, but most of those, who can look back for a good many years on the same place, will allow that there is shame now instead of absolute indifference, and that village public opinion once required far less respectability than at present. Drunkenness is the evil still most rampant and untouched by all our efforts, setting in as it does just when youths are most jealous of being held in check by the influences of their earlier age, and kept up by the many attractions of the public-house. But in speaking of the average cottager, it is to be remembered that he is generally the dull one, or the idle one, of the family. The superior lads and girls find promotion in other lines through the improvement of education and communication, and it is only the unenterprising who remain at home as tillers of the soil; and of their children, the brighter ones go forth into the world, leaving the duller ones to swell the group of unruly lads and rude girls that most parishes can, alas, still produce.

Yet, even thus, the entire class ignorance and indifference is gone. There is a tolerable comprehension of the language used in church, and with the destruction of galleries and high pews, and the silencing of parish clerks, much of that comfortable abstraction of the elders, and sportiveness of the juniors, has been done away with. Most can and do use prayer-books, and, in truth, one of the popular delusions is that people "go to church to read their book," but this granted, the book does a good deal for them. They most of them know the theory of their duty pretty well, and there is not an utter blank when trouble or danger brings them in contact with their pastor. No one will attempt to say that the mass of them are all that they might or ought to be, but what we are contending for is, that they have, in general, made a great advance, not only in material comfort, but in their notions of decency and respectability; and that, wherever there is a stirring of real and active religion, it finds food and support, and is not left to struggle in the dark, or seek supplies of light from the self-kindled sparks of Dissent.

And in every parish there are sure to be thoughtful, conscientious men and women

who have never let drop the training of their childhood, imperfect as it may have been; there are those who have turned aside for a time, but are ready to come back again; and there is much of bright and ready intelligence and promise in the young.

In all endeavours to do good to the multitude, what is to be expected is, that only a very few will derive to the full the benefits offered to them, and that there will be a large proportion scarcely, if at all, the better for them, while the greater number will, to a certain degree, accept and be ameliorated more or less by that acceptance, although to a much less degree than they might and ought to be.

And in writing of this last half-century's movement towards the religious cultivation of the poor, we have spoken more of this unsatisfactory mass than of those who have profited to the utmost, as there is no doubt that many have everywhere done. We fail sometimes to recognize them, because they are no longer the poor. The best of the poor we have to deal with are either the homely and unsuccessful, or those who are returning to better courses in old age. Those of the elder generation who really made use of their education are everywhere in superior situations of trust, and their children in the way of rising higher.

We do not know that to elevate a peasant into one of the lower-middle class is a great achievement, though it may of course lead to further elevation in another generation: but it is the most frequent outcome of the best education a village can give, and we mention it as being exactly what the promoters of secular education held out as an object. The deeper unseen work cannot be gauged, but that one test which is now usually applied as to the spiritual progress of a population does not fail. What was the number of communicants in almost any place compared with what it is now? Does not the recollection of our elder readers go back to the scanty three times, or at most four, at which the clergyman's and squire's families, and the very aged poor, with one or two good women, were the only attendants, and when the general notion of church-going is that described in "Silas Marner"? Allowing for much that is disheartening, and which has ever been the same, we are quite sure that the efforts made in national schools and village libraries have had a great effect for good even on the generality, and that they will tell more and more as the children are more prepared

to receive cultivation, provided only that the same endeavours are successful in keeping divine wisdom the ruler of the studies of our children, and secular instruction only her handmaid. And the persons on whom this chiefly depends are the clergymen and ladies in every parish, and its greatest foes are—not the school boards, nor the six standards, but those breakfast hours which, coinciding exactly with the time allotted for religious instruction in schools, prevent any external help from being given, and throw the teaching of several classes on pupil-teachers or on mere children, who ought to be learning themselves.

From Good Words.

WHAT SHE CAME THROUGH.

BY SARAH TYTLER,
AUTHOR OF "LADY BELL," ETC.

CHAPTER XIV.

POPE'S LOVERS IN THE STORM.

As the afternoon wore on, Joel, who had not only warmed to his work, but had won a certain amount of ease and skill in it, began to show the superiority in lasting power of men's to women's muscles. Some of the most active and vigorous women in the morning were beginning to lag a little and look wistfully at the sun's progress, still they worked on, trained as they were to enduring toil, with Pleasance among them; but it was Joel's turn to gain ground and get ahead and leave the laggards behind him. Pleasance did not look annoyed to be thus beaten; she did not let him have an easy victory; she strove her best to maintain her place, but when she began to feel herself worsted she submitted with a good grace, which was not the least gracious thing about her in his eyes.

"She is no virago, she is as womanly as she is strong and brave," he thought.

All in a moment the clear cloudless sky of the morning, into which great piles and mountain peaks of clouds, still snow-white, had entered ere noon, became dark, and a cool almost chill wind blew upon the heated workers. Looking up to ascertain the reason of the change, the spectacle was presented of these mighty cloud masses—an hour ago so white and radiant with sunlight—in one quarter of the sky hanging low overhead, and of an inky blackness, and in the opposite direction pre-

sending a lividly pale border which formed a dense dull grey pall extending to the verge of the horizon. Before one could say, "A storm is coming," the forked lightning leaped in a jagged stream from the black cloud, a thunder peal crashed after it, and the first great drops of a torrent of rain caused the workers to look round for the nearest shelter. The readiest idea, so natural on such an occasion that it occurred to most of the women at once, was to pull together and pile up the sheaves and to crouch behind them. So rapidly was it put in practice, that in a few moments, before Long Dick who had returned to the field could hurry from the farther end to the women's side, sheaves and ricks presented the same phenomenon as that offered by the bracken bushes on the hillside the moment after Roderick Dhu, having called forth his plaided host to startle the eyes of the knight of Snowdon, had waved them back again into utter invisibility. Not a woman was to be seen, and Joel Wray had vanished with them.

Joel had drawn Pleasance into a nook formed by the sheaves, and divided by its barrier of straw from the nooks in which the rest of the women were ensconced.

The couple were hardly a stone's throw from the others, and yet Joel felt and welcomed the feeling with a conscious exultation as if they two were alone in the storm.

Pleasance might have a similar delusion, she grew rosy red, whether from work or the agitation of the moment, and she looked silently at the flashes of lightning which broke through the rain that hissed and seemed to ascend again in white steam, as it poured, and listened to the rattle of the thunder. "You are not frightened, Pleasance?" he asked her softly, venturing to call her by her Christian name.

She took no notice of what was the universal practice around her, yet a watcher, watching narrowly, might have seen that though Long Dick and everybody she had known for many a day had called her Pleasance, still when this stranger followed their example, the slightest quiver passed over her, and her eyelids drooped for an instant. "Not very," she said, simply, "it is grand, but it is awful."

They were silent again for some minutes, while the storm rolled on. When he spoke next he was moved by a quick impulse. "Have you ever read Pope among your other books?"

"No," she replied, "unless in the little

bits in my 'General Literature.' There were 'Belinda's Toilet' and 'The Dying Christian,' very different specimens."

"But it was not of either of them that I was thinking," he said, "it was of the description of a man and a woman struck dead by lightning in such a field as this."

"Oh dear, what a terrible recollection!" she said, with a natural shudder.

"But it was not so terrible, not so sad, at least as you think," he explained, eagerly; "they died together, in a moment. Don't you think," he hesitated, "that there are people in the world who would like to die thus—that there are experiences in this life worse than death?"

"Ah yes, it is hard for those who are left behind," she said, thinking of herself and Anne. "I had a sister who died, and I wished that I could have died with her." When Pleasance recalled and dwelt on the conversation afterwards, she wondered that she could have spoken of Anne's death to a stranger, she shrank from what she had said as if it had been a sacrilege committed against Anne's memory, and still it had felt no sacrilege at the moment.

"There are relations nearer and dearer than sisters," he said, and stopped abruptly.

And Pleasance knew, though she had never read of Pope's stricken and slain lovers, that it had been true lovers who had been united in an instantaneous fiery death. Her heart palpitated in the silence. Yes, she could comprehend what mercy, nay, what unearthly bliss, there might be in such a death; and this young, glib, brown lad beside her, who had nothing at all of the gloomy hero of romance about him, in whose manliness there was something light-heartedly boyish in its very self-assertion and jauntiness, whose will had been greater than his ability, comprehended the existence of deep passion also.

Soon the air became perceptibly lighter, and a ray of wan and watery sunshine darted suddenly across the gloom to replace the lightning. The rain had lessened, and was gradually ceasing, the hidden reapers began to creep out of their shelter, and to look around them to see if the storm were passing altogether, and prepare to resume their work.

As Pleasance and Joel Wray came forth from their refuge, meaning glances and speeches were exchanged freely by the women. In that comparatively primitive society men and women not only leapt, like children, to rapid conclusions, but proclaimed these conclusions with equally childish candour.

"You be goin' to 'a mor'n one string to your bow, Pleasance," said one young woman sarcastically.

"Mor, us will see what Long Dick will 'a to say to galiwantin' ways," said a matron warningly.

"You 'ad better not put out a finger to touch some folk's goods, young man, if so be you want to keep a whole skin," another motherly woman told Joel Wray.

Both Pleasance and Joel knew in a moment, with burning cheeks and two pairs of eyes that sparkled and gleamed with anger and other feelings in the anger, what was meant, but neither answered the soft impeachment in direct words. Joel said something lightly and defiantly of being able to take care of his own bones, and of this being a free country, where cats could look at kings, and any man might offer any woman an umbrella or its equivalent.

They did not separate, not even so far as the exigences of the field-work might have permitted. Joel did not move an inch from Pleasance's side, and Pleasance, with equal pride, would let him work in the same proximity that they had preserved all the day, while she turned blind eyes and deaf ears to the gathering gloom and surly growls of Long Dick every time his path crossed theirs.

But though she kept a calm front before what was fast becoming the gossip of the field, and to what it might tend, though she even talked and laughed fast and at random because of it, there was a tumult within her, by no means lessened because of the distinct consciousness that, far beyond any anger at what she regarded as the uncalled-for and rude remarks of her associates, there ran through her a thrill of delight at their prophetic truth.

She was more proud than ashamed of being distinguished by this lad, who was but a working-lad like the rest, and yet who was so different from them, and had so much in common with herself, that there was to her a glamour of enchantment about him. And she had never been made proud—only a little vain, perhaps, and with her better feelings touched, by being distinguished, long and sedulously, by poor Dick Blennerhasset. She had a vivid conception which she half resisted, half admitted, in the midst of her indignation and confusion, that this harvest day, with its toil and rest, its splendour and storm, was the happiest day she had ever known.

She recognized with glad humility that he was not offended by the implication which had coupled their names together. So far from its driving him away from her,

it was causing him to abide more unmistakably, and more openly, at her side, while with passionate, long side-looks, he was seeking continually to catch her eye, and to tell her silently with what abandonment he owned the charge, and how he besought her to grant him grace by responding, however faintly, to his dawning love.

By the time that Pleasance got back to the manor-house, escorted to the door without any strong rebuff on her part by the stranger, Joel Wray, the news had travelled to Mrs. Balls. Pleasance had got a new young man, who had been making up to her all the day in the boldest and most marked manner, and to whom Pleasance, who, unassuming as she was, had the reputation of being particular, and who had kept the great match of the parish, Long Dick, at the staff's end for years, was giving evident encouragement.

Mrs. Balls, having her own castles in the air, in which Long Dick figured as master, in a way that was so assuring and "comfortable," was much taken aback and disturbed by this *contretemps*. Thus she also, by her manner, confirmed the view which their other acquaintances had taken, and made Pleasance and the young man feel that her glumness and testiness to Pleasance were all because of the report that had preceded her and the company in which she had come. The flame of love at once discovered, spoken of, opposed, had all that current of air lent to it which other flames require in order to fan them into rapid growth.

Pleasance had promised to send Joel Wray balsam for his smarting feet, as she would have sought to comfort any fellow-creature in need of comfort, and she would not break her promise because of what had come of it.

"Please yourself," Mrs. Balls had said ungraciously, when the proposal was made to her of supplying the relief. "I 'ould let him go and get his blistered feet cured where he came from. What are mechanics — an' he be a mechanic — doing a-strolling about the country like players, takin' nonest folk's work over their heads, and their bites out o' their mouths. We wants none on them — no, not at harvest-time. It is a temptin' on Providence not to take time, and be content with the hands as we 'a knowed all our days. A black-a-vised tanned jumper of a young man as will be here to-day and gone to-morrow. Phillis Plum can do what she likes with his feet, athout you slasterin' and sendin' messes. If I were you, Pleasance, I 'ould 'a nowt

to say to his feet. What are his feet mor' other feet? He 'a been walkin' a many days? The more shame to him; let him walk hisself off to where he started from, an' he dare go back, for it's like enough he started on such a wild-goose chase with a flea in his lug. That's all I a' to say. But you are like the rest on the gals that are women-grown, Pleasance; though you 'a book know and were better bred, you'll 'a your way; but an you wunno take care you'll repent on it. It's ill takin' up with a stranger, even when you dunno slight his betters. Your mother knowed that afore she went out on the world, though she had the luck to marry a gentleman."

Joel came over within the hour of Phillis Plum's receiving the application from Pleasance, to thank her warmly for remembering and desiring to minister to his pain. Churlishly as Mrs. Balls felt inclined to conduct herself towards him, she could not refuse to receive an acquaintance of Pleasance Hatton's; indeed Mrs. Balls had been the first to acknowledge that, according to the freedom granted to working men and women, Pleasance had a right to please herself in the acquaintance.

In addition, disgusted and alarmed as Mrs. Balls was, she could not have the stranger in the manor-kitchen without talking to him, and she could not see him stare at Pleasance's last little drawings fluttering on various parts of the walls, above the dresser, in the window-recess, and on the mantelpiece, without asking him, with consequential complacency, to look at them.

"I dessay you beant accustomed to drawingses, any more than to beasteses, but you can tell a colt or a pup when you see 'em, I suppose?"

Pleasance had not advanced a single step in art, except perhaps that she took rough likenesses with greater facility and celerity than ever. But certainly the parson and Lawyer Lockwood might have been at rest, for she had not spoil a good dairywoman and housekeeper by aspiring to be a tenth-rate artist.

Joel Wray was looking at the drawings with a bright smile. "I recognize every one of the originals," he said, "and I could not do the like, though I have learnt enough drawing to point out most of the wrong strokes. We have so many schools of art," he explained, "which many fellows attend in the evenings, since it helps them in most of their trades."

"If the picters are as like what they

are meant for as one pea to anudder, I dunno see where the wrongness can lie," said Mrs. Balls, stiffly paying no attention to his explanation, and thinking within herself, "A fault-findin' jackanapes and whipper-snapper. This do come to open Pleasance's eyes, sure-ly."

But Pleasance was only glancing shyly at the critic, and reflecting how well he looked in this light, brown as he was and of no great build for a man, but he must have been finely knit, for he stood and sat and leant against the window with the ease and grace which showed what town breeding and its amount of education could do, even for a working-man, while he owed no advantage to dress, for of course he wore his working-dress, he had only washed his face and hands and combed his hair, as Pleasance had done for herself, in the interval since they had parted.

"You read and you draw in midst of your hard work," said Joel, enthusiastically; "are you musical too?" and he looked round as if he expected to see a piano or an organ.

"Oh no," said Pleasance, laughing frankly, "I have forgotten all my music except what belongs to humming a tune. I have hardly voice for the simplest song. I wish I had, for then I could sing as I worked, when I had breath to spare. But if you are fond of music you should hear Clem Blennerhasset and his fiddle; it reminds me of what I learnt about Orpheus in our old mythology lesson."

"Is this Clem Blennerhasset a friend of yours?" asked Joel, with a shade of reserve and vexation in his voice.

"He is the brother of my friend Lizzie Blennerhasset," replied Pleasance, demurely, enjoying, without analyzing the enjoyment, the suspicion of restlessness and annoyance which she had provoked.

"Clem Blennerhasset 'ad better learn to earn his bread afore he plays his whistle," interposed Mrs. Balls innocently; "a great wambling boy like he should be thinking of gettin' out of 's apprenticeship and ceasin' to be tied to Smith Blennerhasset's apron, instead of fiddlin' away every hap'orth of his spare time. I d' know his mother is fretted to fiddle-strings with his fiddlin'."

"Ah, I must hear this boy fiddler," said Joel heartily, with a look of mingled relief and reproach at Pleasance, which she met with a slight laugh, though she could not have told why she laughed the low laugh.

CHAPTER XV.

LONG DICK FINDS A MATE.

THE aggrieved and potent rival soon heard of the incredible story.

To Long Dick's apprehension an incredible story it sounded at first that the odd-day's man whom he had taken on at the manor farm, the flippant stranger mechanic of whom nothing was known, save by his own not altogether satisfactory account, was audaciously making up to Pleasance Hatton, the finest young woman, by a very long chalk, in the place. Joel Wray was making up to Pleasance Hatton with her superior birth and early breeding, and her heiress-ship, and Pleasance of all women, who had on the whole been so shy of Long Dick's lowly worship and modest advances, was listening to this wandering young scamp, as if she were preparing to throw herself away on him. It was as hard as it was cruel to believe.

Long Dick was filled with trouble and wrath, not the least unbearable element in which was that he had raised a stick to break his own head. He it was who had on his own responsibility engaged the stranger to assist in the last day's wheat-hoeing. Long Dick it was who had recommended the bailiff to hire Joel Wray again for the harvest; the result of the hiring being that the bailiff was so pleased with the exertions of the new hand, raw as he was, that he proposed to keep him on for the rest of the autumn to aid in the potato-gathering, the fence-repairing, and the draining, and to do a bit of carpenter's work, as Dick himself did a bit of smith's work, on the farm, when not otherwise engaged.

This would have been bad enough had Joel Wray, who was also what Dick called a "fine scholar" in reading, writing, and ciphering, compared to Dick, managed to outstrip Dick in the bailiff's, and it might be in the end, in Lawyer Lockwood's good graces.

In the mean time the probable supplanter, for reasons of his own, held back from coming in contact either with the bailiff or the squire. When he had to be paid, or when he happened to attract the notice of the higher powers, even though it were their approving notice as of a smart, handy chap, his gift of talking and his self-assertion deserted him entirely, and he would hold down his head, be silent, and get out of the way as fast as he could.

But it was well-nigh unbearable that this forward adventurer should enter the lists where Long Dick, though he had made

small progress, had till then run alone, outstrip his late patron in the race, and carry off the great prize of life for Long Dick.

Long Dick could command some redress for the grievous injury with which he was threatened. All that was wanted was a word from him to the bailiff in disparagement of Joel Wray, an insinuation that he might not be the little that he represented himself, but "some polished rogue and thief," "a rascal who had given his last master leg bail," who was in hiding from the police, and who might end by setting the ricks on fire, or breaking into the bailiff's desk and running off with the contents.

But Long Dick, swelling with wrong and resentment as he was, shrank from such reprisals. All that was manly in the big fellow recoiled from the baseness of the retaliation, for it would be baseness, not caution, seeing that Long Dick, an honest man himself, had an innate conviction of the honesty of the vagabond. He might be a careless, thriftless vagabond, a restless rolling stone, a fickle Jack-of-all-trades, on whom it would be certain hardship and probable destitution with all its misery for Pleasance to bestow herself and her little fortune; but Long Dick believed in his heart of hearts that Joel Wray was as honest as himself, that he was free from vice, and was in some respects as innocent in his smack of boyishness as Pleasance was in her womanhood.

Long Dick was fortified in his manliness by the conclusion which was somehow beaten and burnt in upon his slow intellect, that if he, Long Dick, were so left to himself as to do Joel Wray a shabby turn by getting him found fault with, and dismissed from his temporary place, and if it ever came to Pleasance's knowledge — and she was, among her other distinguished qualities, what Long Dick called a very "knowin'" woman — she would pay him back in kind by never forgiving him.

No, Long Dick preferred to take his chance in a fair fight with his antagonist, bitter as the sense of rivalry was, especially with a rival so unworthy of him, and doubly unworthy of Pleasance.

In those autumn days Long Dick had little rest or peace, save when he had recourse of an evening to his cousin Lizzie, and poured into her ears all that he could bring himself to express of his pain and fury. He was soothed by her endless sympathy, her incredulity as to Pleasance, "being so blind and mad," little reckoning all the time with what life blood of her own

Lizzie was feeding his hunger and thirst for consolation and hope.

For a wonder, in those days of trial, Long Dick did not fall into his old excesses, in addition to Lizzie's urgent representation he was aware from his own intelligence that the crisis was too imminent, he dreaded too much an invidious comparison, for Joel Wray had not swallowed more than his glass of beer since he had first appeared at the Brown Cow. He was sober, this wandering mechanic, whatever other evils he had learnt in his wandering.

Long Dick shook off all his comrades save his faithful slave and cousin Lizzie at this time, above all he turned grimly from Joel Wray, who showed, on the other hand, a perverse inclination to make up to the head man of the farm, and even to stand some roughness from him, if he could but win him to be friendly at last.

Joel was very friendly himself, pleasant as well as fluent of speech to old and young, and looked, in general, as unconscious of giving any individual offence as when he had disappointed the giddier girls of Saxford by being bent upon his task of wheat-hoeing, and failing so much as to see their attempts to attract his attention and draw him into a rustic flirtation.

Joel, in spite of this ungallant overlook, in spite of his having only amended his first fault by the cool confidence which had caused him to bestow his regard on "Madam," who had a lover already, the best in the place, was a favourite with the women. He was liked by old and young, from Mrs. Morse and Phillis Plum, to whom he gave no trouble, down to Phillis's grand-daughter, little Polly, for whom he cut puppet dolls out of the pith of the elder — by all except Lizzie Blennerhasset; she saw him through her cousin Dick's eyes, and thought him a trifling, insignificant, yet blustering chap, a lad who was not worth a woman's looking at. Yet Dick was juster in his judgment, and knew to his torment that Joel Wray, though no giant like himself, had more than a man's spirit, was straight as an oak sapling, lithe as a willow wand, a proper young fellow who might very well steal a girl's heart, though such a girl's heart as Pleasance Hatton's was seldom found.

Joel had become so popular in the place that he gave back to Pleasance some of her popularity, repeatedly reduced and impaired as it had been by her wearing spectacles, by her coming into a fortune, and, last and greatest liberty of all, by her not having stopped short with conquering Long Dick, the old hero of Saxford, but

extending the conquest to its new hero, Joel Wray. Joel was so great a favourite himself that his favour cast a halo of cancelled debt and reflected glory round Pleasance.

But Joel was not satisfied with the women's homage, or with the sneaking admiration of young Ned, the good-will of old Miles Plum, or even of such magnates as Smith Blennerhasset or Host Morse, whom Joel propitiated by discussing with them London news. He would make up to Long Dick, though Joel was continually getting over the knuckles, in a figure, for his assurance, and was shown with rude plainness that Long Dick scouted his companionship. Either Joel was very impervious to broad hints, very indiscreet—or he had been accustomed to have his own way and to be spoilt, as he had once said—or he had that craving for general good-fellowship which with some men is a passion—or he had conceived a vehement, one-sided liking for Long Dick, for he would not be repulsed, would not keep himself at a safe distance, but returned again and again to the vain charge. He made Long Dick's life more miserable than it would otherwise have been, by introducing into it a strong temptation to punch Joel Wray's head, or fight him in some fashion, while Joel Wray was a champion unworthy of Dick's superior prowess, and further, was under the protection of Pleasance's friendship, however wayward and indiscriminating, so that Dick had to resist the inclination as best he might.

Long Dick had ridden round one evening, on a plough-horse, to see the cattle in an out-lying field, and was returning by Saxford Broad, cumbered and heavy with all those troubles. He was not aware that he was calmed by the repose of the evening, which was somewhat cloudy and lowering like Dick's state of mind, or by the peaceful stillness of the Broad, with its birds gone to rest. It presented a great sheet of rippled, slate-coloured water, unbroken at this moment by any barge, and with the profound quiet of its character increased, as it appeared, by the perfect flatness of its indented shores, which offered rush-bordered, ferny meadows, and a little wood, but not a height or bank. Calmed or not, Dick, according to custom, walked the horse into the shallow water, deepening as he went, to wash the animal's fetlocks, and to relieve them of the gathered dried mire of the day.

He had done the same thing every time he had passed the Broad, even when driv-

ing a wain with a couple of horses, on a hundred occasions, and he had no more dreamt of danger than he would have feared to go about his morning's yoking, or to lie down in his bed at night. But whether Dick's mind had got dazed with his cares, and he had departed from the usual approach of horses to the Broad, or whether some unapprehended change had taken place in the ground, all at once the horse he rode, a steady old horse as Dick knew it, plunged one fore foot into a hole of several inches depth, and with a wild struggle and splash, fell head foremost into the water, before Dick could slide from its back. He kept his seat, and was not sensible of injury, but by the cold rush of water round them, he became aware that it was deep enough to drown both horse and man unless the horse could regain its footing, or Dick could disentangle himself, and use his power of swimming which he had learnt in his sailor's trip from Cheam, to reach by a few strokes the near shore. But in the surprise of the momentary accident he had been guilty of an oversight, which was likely to be fatal to both horse and man—he had let the bridle be dragged from his grasp, and it was now caught in the terrified horse's feet, so that the capacity to aid it in its frantic efforts to rise was lost, while at the same time the weight of the animal, and its convulsive efforts to get up rendered it a matter of the utmost difficulty and danger for him, even unhurt as yet, save by a bruise or two, to free himself from what would otherwise be a certain death.

It took but a few seconds for the incident, together with the despairing sense on Long Dick's part, that he was unable of his own ability to extricate himself, that every violent strain he made was exhausting even his boasted strength, that every stroke the horse gave threatened to disable or to kill him on the instant, that there was no help at hand, and the night was closing in. The consciousness that his act of washing the horse's feet had been so ordinary an act, and that the shore and safety were absolutely near, seemed only to render his impending fate harder and more bitter, without its being able to nerve him to hold out a moment longer.

People say that a drowning man's past life flashes before him, in its entirety, in a second of time. Perhaps Dick was too constitutionally and intellectually sluggish for such a marvel to be accomplished in his case. He was but dimly aware as con-

sciousness was fast deserting him, and as his attempts to shake himself loose became as fitful and intermittent as the horse's rolling and kicking, that he wondered whether Pleasance Hatton would be sorry, and then that he was sorry for himself, in his own extremity, and for poor little Lizzie Blennerhasset's broken heart, before he said "Lord Jesus, help me," and in the same breath, heard faintly like a voice in a dream or in another world, a cry from the farther side of that end of the Broad.

Long Dick knew nothing farther — not of the figure that rushed into the water, and began to swim with the speed and directness of a practised swimmer — not of the mingled daring and caution with which the swimmer approached the eddying circles formed round the prostrate man and horse, still struggling and emerging at intervals — not of the grasp on his shoulder, and the shout into his failing ears which yet he mechanically obeyed, to try once again, as the horse swerved to a side — not when he was relieved from the horrible burden that had been weighing him down, and was dragged, happily only a few yards, and landed on the shore.

When Long Dick came to himself he was lying high and dry among the rushes, his head on the knee of a man, who was striving by an impromptu adaptation of all the theories which he had ever heard for the recovery of drowning men, to bring Dick back to himself. With the first conscious glance Dick recognized his detested rival, Joel Wray.

"There, old fellow, you're coming round," said Joel, cheerily, almost affectionately, redoubling his amateur medical offices. "What a mercy I turned out before supper, and walked as far as the Broad, to have a look at the ducks and plover which were all gone to roost hours ago! But it is an ill wind which blows nobody good. I knew you were not such a fine lady as to be finished off by a mouthful of cold water, such as I have shipped myself not only in little Cherwell, but in old Father Thames, more than once or twice either. I wish it were the thing for working-men to carry a flask, I am sure they need it, as much as your sportsman or foxhunter. If I had had mine — one of my own I mean — I could have put a drop of brandy into your mouth, and brought you alive again in no time. Look here, you ain't kicked by that unfortunate beast?"

Dick was grumbling as soon as he was able to speak that he was not an "old fel-

low" — he was only growing four-and-twenty — any more than a fine lady, and he did not want brandy to cure him of a ducking, and where was the horse? With that Dick sat up in his dripping clothes, and peered through the dusk at the leaden-looking Broad, on which there was now neither bubble nor circle.

Joel Wray in an equally dripping condition as to raiment, sat up by Dick's side and looked with commiseration into his face.

"Don't take on about it, old — young fellow, it could not be helped. I could not save both of you, and the man came before the beast, not that men are always better than beasts either. Any way I could not have given the horse a leg up, it would be sheer brag to pretend it. He is done for, poor horse, lying quietly enough now, at the bottom of the hole you both managed to get into, at this edge of the Broad. Be thankful that you are out of it. All the same, I know you must be cut up for the dumb animal that you've worked with for years, I dare say, and that you have come to know like a brother, I have some notion of what the loss is, and I can feel for it."

Dick stared stupidly at the water, he was moist enough already, his tawny hair was dropping at every point still, but more moisture gathered in his blue eyes, and when he spoke it was with a lump in his throat that half choked him, and which he had to gulp down before he could make his quivering voice audible.

"I druv and guided him from the first day I came to the manor, three years gone; he were as tractable as a child, and never needed aught, save a word; Pleasance were used to ride him from the field, and he knew her and whinnied when she came near his stall. Her will cry her eyes out to-night. He were up in years for a hoss, and had served his day; he were not that much worth in hoss flesh, let alone Lawyer Lockwood, he d' know haccidents will 'appen, and will not count it out of my caracker; but for all that, I'd liefer all my savin's and my next year's wages were cast into that water, if so be owd Punch 'ould rise out on it, standin', stampin' his feet, archin' his neck, and nickerin' for his feed as he were wont to do at this hour, like a Chrissen."

"Yes, yes, I know," said Joel, quite tenderly, "it ain't the loss of the tin, for that might be made up, it's the thought of the creature that worked for, and trusted us, and came to grief through our shortsightedness, that is the sting. But get up, and

come along with me, else the night will be down, and we'll catch our death of cold."

"You are a discernin' chap, Joel Wray," said Long Dick slowly, as the two rose after they had fraternized over the destruction of the horse. "If you had hammered up on poor Punch bein' old, and well-nigh fit for the kennel, as some folks despise them faithful old hosses, wool, I 'ould still owe you my life at the risk of your own, for you were an ugly venture, with the poor beast as were so sensible, a-flinging out with terror like mad, with the torter on chokin, never to obey a word or sign more. But now I can bring myself to thank you hearty, though, mind, I say I 'a borne a big grudge again you these ten days back, and I 'on't say that I 'a no cause, on'y I ain't such a heartless brute nudder, as not to be grateful for life—more'n that the lad as has felt with me for Punch is a good un, odd man, or stuck mechanic on the tramp, as he may be."

"Bosh! any fellow would have done it," said Joel Wray, but colouring with bashfulness, that was decidedly becoming in one that was usually so confident, and with pleasure. "You would have done the same and more for me, or any man. There ain't any merit in it; we cannot help it; we should be worse than our dogs if we didn't obey an instinct of rushing to the rescue. But I say, Dick, I like you, you know I have liked you from the first, and I want a mate like you to stand by and teach me many things that I have set my heart on learning. If I—if we are opposed on some things, on which we can't help being opposed, because they may get to be more than life and death to us—can't we make up our minds to differ on one or two subjects and to agree on the rest? Can't we be friendly foes in the middle of our strife, or even get to like each other? because I am sure you have the making of a gentleman in you—the root out of which all true gentleness has risen—I mean you are an honest, brave man, whatever your blunders and shortcomings. And for that matter, we are all in a precious mess together in this blessed country—which we persist in saying is so exceptionally free and prosperous—in addition to misunderstanding, and misjudging, and coming down like thunder on each other. And if one or two of us seek to get behind the scenes to learn a thing or two of our common humanity, to use, God willing, in the end, for the good of all, as the greatest enterprise with which the times provide

us, why we are held to be fools or worse, that is the justice we are treated to!"

Long Dick stared blankly at this tirade. In the beginning of the speech Joel Wray's voice had been curiously persuasive, while in the end it had passed into the dogmatic, dogged, indignant tones of a man who is riding a hobby, and riding it to death, not altogether unconsciously; withal there was that monotony stealing into the accents which attends upon the habitual dreamer, who, if he does not commit the ancient vagary of soliloquizing, is still in the habit of holding mentally long conversations with himself, in which he is the sole speaker, or if he ever argues with himself, only raises phantom objections in order to lay them, ghost-fashion, again.

Long Dick had never heard anything like this lecture in private life before. He made up his mind that Joel Wray must have taken, amongst his other trades, to "Methody" preaching, at one time, though he was a Churchman now; or must have abode for a season with such a troop of strolling players as Dick had seen at Cheam, and at the neighbouring fairs. As an acquirement derived from either walk of life, he had learnt to "spout," in addition to his ordinary long tongue, which was wont to wag like a girl's, and was treating Dick to the performance, it might be, as a distraction or solace after his recent misfortune and agitation.

Dick did not like it, did not feel so propitiated by the cleverness of the exhibition as by Joel's simple words of sympathy for the horse's fate: in fact it grated disagreeably on sturdy, stolid Dick's principles, as something out of place and insincere, something like laughing at his forced, painful admission and concession. It required the vivid, restraining sense of the benefit just conferred to prevent Long Dick's feeling aggrieved, if not insulted, by the folly.

After a moment, Joel Wray seemed himself affronted at his own harebrained application of and improvement of the occasion on the country road, through the gathering darkness. He strode along in silence, with a certain air of discomfiture and discontent in his gait. When he spoke again it was to repeat briefly and wistfully the entreaty that Long Dick would let Joel be his mate, and would bear with him in his ignorance, cockiness, shallowness, light-heartedness, whatever it was; that he would, when they were forced to be foes, help Joel in the task he had set himself that they should be fair foes, and do each other no greater wrong

than what they could not hinder, and must remember with regret in their greatest gain. "For do you know, Dick, I cannot tell what our Christianity is worth if it be not to make us better foes, as well as better friends. You have heard of the Knights of the Round Table, Dick? the ring children keep up yet in their play?"

"I dunno know as I 'a heard on them," said Dick quickly and surlily, for he was half divided between wonder and confusion at the bold interloper's strange, unexpected humility, while he dreaded that Joel was going back to his out-of-season spouting. "An' if I 'a heard on 'em, I dunno know what such shams 'a to do with you and me. They may belong to passon's sermons, or to barn-plays, but they ain't my price. I'll tell you what, my lad, seems to me your brain be turned with book know, which you've been mindin' 'stead on your proper trade."

"Maybe you're right, Long Dick," answered Joel Wray with a laugh and a sigh. "Forgive me for naming Don Quixote, and bringing him also neck and crop into the discussion. It is a bad habit I always had, too speculative and fanciful by half, my very teachers said. But if you had heard, which I suppose you have not, of that other knight, Don Quixote, you might have capped the Britons with the Spaniard, and pointed your moral far more aptly than I have pointed mine. However, we'll let all the old shams, as you call them, rest in their graves, or better, between the boards of the books where alone they've had a life, if you will promise me that we shall be friends from to-night. Yes, I will say it, Dick, even for the sake of Pleasance Hatton, who is your price, though the Knights of the Round Table ain't (but you may hear their history from her sweet lips, though you won't from mine), at whose feet we are both fain to lie. In the name of Pleasance, Dick, whom I've a round guess it would please above all things, let us be friends, and take no gross or mean advantage over each other."

"You d' be too fast, Joel Wray," grumbled Dick; "you be a queer customer; I be pounded if I can make you out. But arter what 'a come and gone to-night, and you a-walking there in the night air, a-steam' in your wet clothes, fit to get your death on cold—and you town-bred—from fishin' me out on the Broad, among the feet of Punch, and sorry, too, for the poor old hoss, wool, I suppose we do be friends, sin' you will 'a it, till bettern or worsn come on it."

"If like d' draw to like," Dick said to himself, when the two parted, with a mixture of doubt, admiration, and bitterness, "Pleasance will fall to his lot. I'll be cut out, for he do have a smack on her."

From The Saturday Review.
FURNISHING.

It appears probable that a few years hence we may see a strong reaction of taste in favour of extreme simplicity which will influence both dress and furniture. Materials will naturally be more costly and magnificent, but these qualities will no longer be found in mere trimmings. So many people have been bitten with the present madness for decoration—people, for the most part, who have never paused to think what decoration is—that those who have innate good taste, or who have studied ornament on rational grounds, will presently flee in disgust to whitewashed walls and dimity curtains. Such sensitive spirits deserve sympathy. They have been sorely tried. The man cursed with natural or acquired taste walks through the valley of this world as through a place of torture and humiliation. His best feelings are made scourges wherewithal to torment him. After preaching for years the mission of art in the regeneration of the uncivilized, he finds all his pet theories turned against him. He may love Japanese screens where any screens are required, but he might be roasted alive in a friend's drawing-room before he could get one for use. The walls are, so to speak, creeping with Japanese screens, but what cares he how Japanese they be if he has no ladder by him to fetch one down? Blue plates are very well adapted to feed from, and may look very well in the china-closet. But, hung on wires in formal rows, they become monotonous. When ladies washed up their own china after a "dish of tea," as they replaced it carefully in a corner cupboard or on a miniature dresser, it was quite right that such articles of convenience should be as handsome as the porcelain itself. But when ladies no longer tend their own tea-things, it is ridiculous to see sets of cups and saucers ranged on shelves in the drawing-room with a teapot or two in the middle, none of them ever intended for the unhallowed uses of everyday life. Why should slop-basins be studded over the room as thick as spittoons in a bar-parlour? They are matter in the wrong place. A pat of butter is

none the better for a splendid device on its unctuous surface. Perhaps our lumps of coal will soon be sent up to the drawing-room carved and gilt for the burning. One longs to see ornament in its proper place. Candlesticks that hold no candles, flower-vases empty of roses, copper coal-scuttles of antique form on the tops of cabinets, beer-jugs filled only with dust, such are the contents of modern rooms. Greek tombs, Oriental pagodas, and curiosity-shops in Holborn are ransacked to furnish our chambers, and while the shelves are covered with old Worcester and the mantelpiece groans under brazen chargers, our tea is served in Staffordshire stone-ware set out on a Birmingham tray. This is turning domestic art upside down and inside out. Though handsomely bound books form the best ornaments for the library shelf, we seldom think of bestowing, even on what we read, any but the gaudy cloth of the modern publisher. Yet books can be arranged so as to form as harmonious a wainscoting as Indian matting, and are surely a more satisfactory investment than even old oak, while for the purposes of ordinary decoration there is nothing for a moment to be compared with natural flowers. It is in beautifying the things we use that the most lasting satisfaction is to be found, not in buying rows of greybeard jugs or Italian medicine-jars.

When a young couple set up house nowadays they are obliged at least to pretend that they wish to furnish artistically. If they have lived outside the circle of art-culture, and have no notion whether they like Gothic, Queen Anne, or rococo, they send for all the manuals they see advertised about tables and chairs, houses and housekeeping. They study them most assiduously, and make copious notes. But, strange to say, the more they read the further they are from being able to come to any decision as to the colour of the drawing-room paper or the pattern of the dining-room curtains. In the multitude of counsellors there is complete confusion, and they wish in their hearts, though they are ashamed to say so, that they might have the good old mahogany with which their fathers and mothers were happy and comfortable. They do not recognize harmony in colour when they see it. A child in a blue frock holding an orange in its hand gives them no delight; a Greek vase of exquisite proportions has for them no grace. In short, neither by nature nor education have they any taste for art, and they expect to acquire it simply by wishing

to be in the fashion. But it is no more possible for a person without natural eye to harmonize colour properly, or choose furniture of just proportions, than it would be possible for any one without natural ear to compose an opera. However, as fashion has to be studied in dress, why should it not be studied in furniture? There are plenty of people who talk glibly about high art and ceramic trademarks and are only too ready to give advice. Almost every magazine has its articles on the subject. But with a smattering of knowledge the difficulties become greater than ever, and the poor young people, so ready to do what is required of them, become completely mystified and discouraged.

One manual on this subject, written by a lady who has already explained how other ladies may dress on fifteen pounds a year provided they practice strict economy in the matter of underclothing, looks delightfully practical. There is a list at the end of the various things required in a ten or twelve room house where two maid-servants and a man are kept. The whole furnishing is to be done for between five and six hundred pounds. Everything seems most complete, and it is perhaps a little hypercritical to remark that two aprons seem a rather small allowance for the butler, and that he must have some difficulty in attending to all the fires with only one coal-scuttle, even though that one be made of copper. Then, too, the cook will be an excellent manager if she can make three bowls serve for beating eggs, mixing sauces, putting by dripping and gravy, storing milk, boiling puddings, and all the other duties for which bowls are required. However, these are small matters compared to the important question as to what is to be the prevailing tint of the room in which the dishes produced in the kitchen are to be eaten. The young couple are advised in small rooms to limit themselves to two colours, for fear the effect should become "messy." Blue is discarded as not being economical and as difficult to manage, because shades that match in daylight do not look well together at night. But some charming combinations are suggested where more liberty is allowed. For instance, a pale primrose wall, a dull canary-coloured carpet, and cheerful green curtains are considered suitable for a room with a "medium aspect"; while "blush-rose walls, a warm crimson carpet, and green curtains containing a dash of pink," will suit a northern exposure. The bedrooms may be painted in oak graining, because it is uncommon for a bedroom, but

the paper must be "unvexatious." The smoking-apartment is to have a "manly pattern" chintz, and the carpet is to be Turkey if possible, because men are such fidgets. Of course it is quite right to have a "manly pattern" in the smoking-room, for even at the Doublesex Club ladies are not permitted to enter the sacred precincts. Our young couple suppose that this is an example of realistic art, and are thankful for the clear definition of a manly pattern as "something in stripes in which red predominates." Having collected all these useful hints, they turn to an aesthetic-looking volume with a fascinating label in white paper. Here they reach a higher, if not a clearer, atmosphere. There are not such explicit directions, but the sentiments are beautiful. In it they find true principles of art-decoration; and yet they are allowed to have their "normal surroundings" in harmony with their individual taste, being only cautioned that a "room should be set in a certain key, and, if allowed to fall out of it for the sake of variety, should speedily return into its normal channel." This, they admit, sounds most subtle. How charming to think of colour being harmonized like a glee, and all the things in the room keeping in tune, no matter how much you move them about! But what is to be done with the splendid scarlet table cover which has been given them, if the drawing-room is to be sage green? It will be like a major chord struck by chance in a minor air, and properly-strung eyes will thrill with pain at the sight. But, on reading a little further, the young couple receive much comfort, and find it will not be absolutely necessary to put away all their wedding presents in locked drawers. Even the claims of art, it seems, are to be disregarded when they stand in antagonism to the smallest token of esteem and affection; or, as the writer finely puts the delightful sentiment, "The principle which regards the motive of a gift is deeper than that which contemplates with critical nicety the attributes of the thing given." They are to choose a place as "much in the dark as possible" for the piano, which is a cruel blow, as they sing duets together, but they also find that furnishing should be a thing of the heart as well as of the head, which encourages them amazingly. Presently they come to a passage which dispels half their troubles, for they read that young married people should not scour the country, seeking for the musty old bureaux of defunct ancestors, but have new furniture, and grow old with it. They now make a

dash at a bulky catalogue which has been sent them post-free, and which they have hitherto been afraid to look at because the things were all new. It seems, however, to combine in the most wonderful manner the practical, the artistic, the useful, and ornamental. It talks of stencilled walls and tinted ceilings, quotes Pugin, Sir Digby Wyatt, Mr. Ruskin, and Mrs. Warren. It is an immense relief to find some one who will take upon himself the responsibility of providing everything from garret to cellar, to whom the furnishing of a house is a "labour of love" for which he will condescend to take money. So it is arranged that the house is to be done up in all the proper tints, to have dados, wainscotings, and varnished floors. "Elizabethan easy-chairs with cabriole legs" and an "elegant walnut Louis-Quatorze lady's cabinet writing-table, handsomely inlaid with *marqueterie*," are ordered for the drawing-room; Cromwell chairs and "antique carved oak book-cases" for the library. There are to be "baronial" coal-vases with mediæval mountings, an "Athenian hip-bath," an "Eastlake" breakfast service, and Minton tiles in all the fire-places.

The young couple get into their house at last; they give the finishing touches by placing bits of china and odds and ends of embroidery about the room. They pay their bills, the house is hideous, and they never find it out.

From Sunday at Home.

SOUL-TRAPS.

I SHALL never forget the great pile of rejected gods, instruments of priestcraft, and stone adzes presented to me one evening in the summer of 1862 by the chiefs and "sacred men" of Danger Island. I was the first white missionary to land amongst them. The sun had set; not a breath of air was stirring; the lagoon was like a mirror; a great crowd of dusky faces was looking on with evident interest and anxiety. One could not help being reminded of the scene that took place at Ephesus (Acts xix. 19). The most novel things in the heap were two soul-traps (*ere vaenua*), each consisting of a series of rings twisted in cocoanut fibre, and arranged on either side of a long sinnet cord. One soul-trap was twenty-eight feet long, the other fourteen feet. Some of the loops are large, others small. The following account was then and there given to

me of the use of soul-traps. If a person had the misfortune to offend the "sacred men," or were very ill, a soul-trap would be suspended by night from a branch of one of the gigantic laurel-trees (*puka*), overshadowing his dwelling. If the family inquired "the sin for which the soul-trap was set up," some ceremonial offence against the gods would of course be assigned. The priest would sit opposite watching. If an insect or small bird chanced to fly through one of the loops, it was asserted that the soul of the culprit, assuming this form, had passed into the trap. The demon *Vaerua*, or spirit presiding over spirit-world, was believed to hurry off the unlucky soul to the shades to feast upon. It would be speedily known throughout the island that So-and-so had lost his soul, and great would be the lamentation. The friends of the unhappy man would seek to propitiate the sorcerer by large presents of food and property, begging him to intercede with dread *Vaerua* for the restoration of the soul. This was sometimes accomplished; but at other times the priest reported that his prayers were unavailing, and *Vaerua* could not be induced to send back the spirit to reinhabit the body. The culprit fully believing all the priest said — was he not the mouthpiece of the gods, and cognisant of the secrets of spirit-world? — gives up all hope. His friends mourn over him as one dead; and at last the poor fellow fades away through sheer mental distress at having his spirit thus ensnared. In cases of mere sickness, where the friends were anxious to know whether the sick man would get well again, if the priest reported that his spirit did not enter the snare it was inferred that he would recover. I inquired why some of the loops were so large whilst others were so small. The "sacred man" said to me testily, "Don't you know that there are different sorts of souls — some small and others large?" I understood him to mean, that the large loops were to entrap the souls of adults, the smaller ones to catch the souls of infants. The words used would also imply that the large loops were for the souls of chiefs, and the small ones for the souls of common people. The theory of sickness and death underlying all this is, that certain gods feed exclusively upon human spirits. Hence the abusive epithet often applied to them, "*atua kai tangata*" — "man-eating gods;" i.e., for trivial offences devouring the souls of their worshippers. If once the soul be eaten by the god, the

body — which is regarded as the mere shell or casing of the spirit — must fade away and die. In heathenism, throughout Polynesia, no one was believed to die a natural death; there was always some special offence against the gods. Failure was believed to be invariably visited by the gods with death. Thanks to the gospel of the blessed God, the natives of Danger Island no longer fear soul-traps. Those who fear God, need fear nothing else. It is interesting to note that priestcraft is the same all the world over — amongst the heathen and amongst civilized races. It originates in an inordinate lust of power over one's fellows, coupled with the assumption that they — "the sacred men," or priestly caste — have special authority delegated to them over the invisible world.

From The Standard.

A FRENCHMAN ON FRENCH WOMEN.

AT the present day the education of girls is nearly exclusively in the hands of the clergy. The convents have organised a regular monopoly of female education; they have rendered secular competition entirely out of the question. It is easy to understand that the clerical party should wish to retain that monopoly. In a few years some of these girls will take the veil, and the convent where they were brought up will reap the benefit of their unreserved co-operation and their fortune; and they will be thus instrumental in paving the way for the influence of the clergy over the next generation. The greater number of them will marry and have children. They will bring up the children in the same way that they themselves have been trained in. They will receive the *mot d'ordre* from the clerical party: they will promote its collections — its associations — its works of charity and propaganda; the influence they may have over their husbands, their families, and their friends, will be used for the benefit of the clergy. Now, this education which women receive is deplorable. It is equally objectionable for what it does teach, and for what it does not teach. As regards instruction, it is absolutely insufficient. If one could get a glimpse into the intellect of a girl leaving school, one would be terrified at the huge gaps existing in it. No philosophy, no science, no philology, no history. The practice of arithmetic does duty for mathematical science, and

the principles and theories are seldom or never touched upon. As for natural science, they have to rest satisfied with a few experiments akin to those which delight children at the conjurors on the Boulevards. On the other hand, they are taught sacred history with great minuteness, and what that history is like is enough to make one shudder. A glance at the books used in convents will show that facts are distorted, characters altered, events accommodated for the greater glory of the Church of Rome. The men, at all events, ignorant though they be, have a glimmering of the existence of such a thing as a scientific method. But there is no phenomenon so rare as a woman having a distinct notion of what science means. Mysticism is at the bottom of the conventual system of education, and instead of developing and sharpening their reasoning faculties, the imagination, with all its morbid tendencies, is unduly put through a forcing process. In short, with a few happy exceptions, female education in France does not rise above the level of professional training. According to the social class to which they belong that professional training varies. Some who are meant for milliners learn to sew, to use scissors, and to work the sewing-machine; others intended for cooks, learn to light a fire, to truss a chicken, and to clean saucapans. Others who are intended to "shine in society," are trained to hold their heads up, to bow gracefully, to play on the piano, and to talk about frivolous gossip without looking bored. All equally are taught to spell, and to make themselves agreeable. The only difference between them is that some of them wear a cap and others a bonnet; some are attired in silks and satins, others in cotton, and some wear a larger quantity of artificial hair than others. Internally the difference is not considerable. A psychologist, who merely heard them arguing without looking at their hands, would be often greatly puzzled to make out which was the *grande dame* and which was the cook. There is an enormous difference between men of different class. The *bourgeois* and the artisans do not appear to belong to the same order of creation; when they are casually thrown together they are at a loss what to say to each other. The one has no ideas except his impressions—he has never been taught to control his impulses, or to rise above his instincts. The other has received a scientific training of some kind that makes

relatively a man of him. The artisan whom an unexpected turn of fortune has raised above his position is always ill at ease in the new sphere on which he has been promoted. He is awkward, ungainly, ridiculous—in short, a *parvenu*. On the other hand, it has often been remarked how easily a woman whom marriage or a happy chance has raised to a social rank she was not born to, accommodates herself to her new station. She very soon acquires the manners, the language, and the general habits of her new condition, and no one would guess that ever she was otherwise than what she seems. People generally ascribe this to the faculty of assimilation which women possess; it would be more accurate to ascribe it to the fact that women of different ranks only differ by mere outward style and manner, which can be easily acquired with a little care, patience, and *amour propre*. Take a duchess, a banker's wife, a workwoman, a mere peasant. The odds are you will find them all equally credulous. They are all equally frightened at bogies, witches, and ghosts; they are all equally afraid in the dark; they all equally show the same readiness to fall a prey to the wiles of somnambulists and spirit-rappers. They will all equally prefer the advice of a homœopathist to that of a regular doctor, and place implicit faith in miracles, pilgrimages, relics, and so forth. Indeed, if there be a difference between the *grande dame* and the waiting-woman who combs her hair, we think the balance is often in favour of the latter. . . . Now, as there is no doubt that naturally women are quite as intellectual as men at the outset of life, we must infer that the evil rests in their education. That education is pernicious in every way. From a social point of view, nothing has been so powerful a hindrance to the preservation of the internal peace of France for the last sixty years as the influence of French women. On trying occasions they are heroic. The courage with which they bore privations during the siege of Paris can never be forgotten; but those privations once over their heroism ceased. Always impassioned, the women have ever been the advocates—and powerful advocates—of political mistakes. By turns they are all for rash generosity or insane reaction. When a civil war has broken out, when a revolution has frightened them, no repression is too severe, no vengeance too cruel in their eyes.

PARIS CORRESPONDENT.